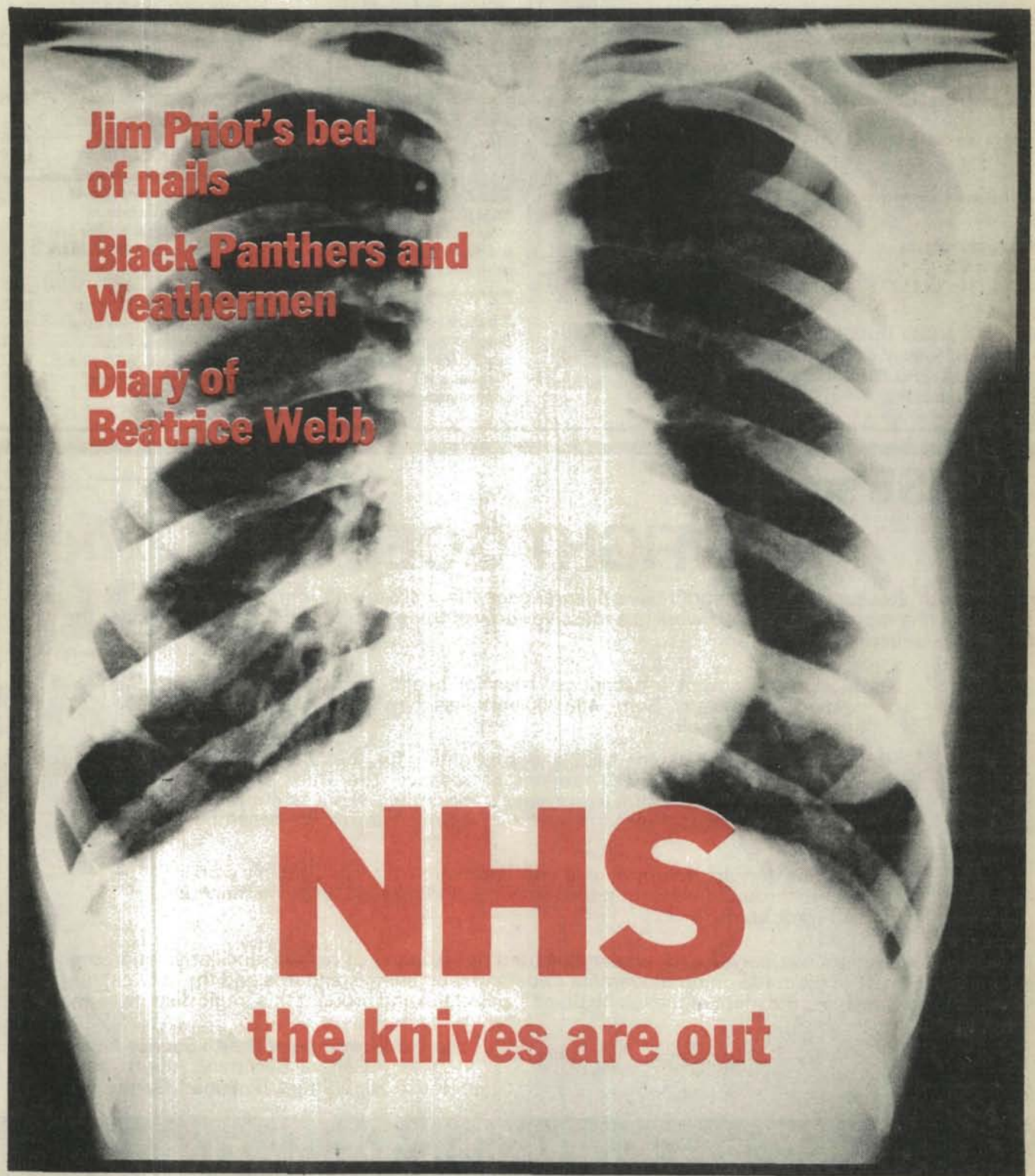
NOV 2 9 1982

AMBASSADOR
COLLEGE LIBRARY

15 October 1982 60p IR91p US$1.50 By Air

New Statesman



Jim Prior's bed of nails

Black Panthers and Weathermen

Diary of Beatrice Webb

NHS
the knives are out

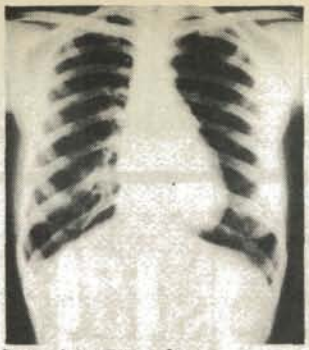
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

New Statesman

10 Great Turnstile
London WC1V 7HJ
Tel: 01-405 8471 Telex: 28449
Cables: Newstat, London WC1
©1982 Statesman & Nation Publishing Company Ltd and contributors
Published and distributed by The Statesman & Nation Publishing Company Ltd

Circulation: Liz Cooper, Tim Freeman
Display: Michael Roberts
Classified: Laura Berryman, Steve Mitchell
Classified tel nos: 01-405 4911
01-242 5484

Subscription Rates
Surface mail:
UK £26, Overseas £29
Air mail:
Europe £34, Middle East £36, Africa, India, South America £40, Australasia, Far East £45, USA $79, Canada $92



Cover photo: Popperfoto

The knives are out
The Think Tank's report won't lie down. Francis Wheen and Patrick Wintour examine the Tories' real attitude towards the National Health Service p.8

Northern Ireland
Jim Prior struggles to make anything of his new Assembly. As Mary Holland reports, the political odds are against him p.12

Black Panthers
Robbery with violence in up-state New York. But is the Brinks case evidence that urban guerrillas are still organised in the US? p.17

The Beatrice Webb Diary
Anna Coote reviews the first volume of Beatrice Webb's *Diary* and discovers a fascinating personality p.23

Theatre
Benedict Nightingale considers the new Peter Nichols play at the Barbican and finds it disappointing p.28

News – asbestosis; Militant candidates; the Met's manual; cable TV; civil defence; BP tankers; Merseyside's blight p.4
Peter Kellner: the SDP p.7
Trevor Fisher: Football's directors p.13
Duncan Campbell: Edinburgh police p.14
This England p.14
Diary: Christopher Price p.16
Roger Woddis p.16
Claudia Wright: Iraq's balancing act p.18
Peter Pringle: Reagan's red hunting p.19
Tony Catterall: West Germany's Greens p.20
Letters p.21
Bretécher p.22
Nigel Cross: A life of Gissing p.23
Jim McGuigan: The book trade p.25
John Spurling: Victorian sculpture p.26
Poem: Harry Clifton p.26
Shorter reviews: Anne Karpf on civil liberties; **David Montrose** on literary psychology; **Glyn Ford** on chimpanzee politics; **Mark Benney** on the Law Lords; **Gustaw Moszcz** on Poland p.27
Harriett Gilbert: Fiction p.28
Sam Richards: Folk music p.30
John Coleman: Films p.31
William Boyd: Television p.31
Weekend Competition p.32
John McVicar p.33

Advertisement

COHSE says . . .

THE FIGHT GOES ON

Hundreds of thousands of NHS staffs have been engaged in a six-month long struggle with the Government. Millions more have stopped work in a massive show of trade union solidarity not seen since the days of the 1926 General Strike. **Why?**

- **Because** they want a decent pay rise for health staffs who survive on desperately low pay. Some 400,000 earn less than the official poverty line figure of £82 a week.
- **Because** they believe the NHS is worth fighting for, that the principle of a free-at-point-of-use service remains sacrosanct. The Think Tank report and Oxford Region's drastic proposals for cutting services are ominous signs of Government plans to introduce a private insurance-based health service.
- **Because** they are determined to end Thatcher's attack on Britain's working people through incessant public sector spending cuts, wage restraint and anti-trade union laws.

The Tory Government has consistently underestimated the strength of nurses, ancillaries and other NHS staffs, and the rest of the trade union movement to defend their living standards and the service they work for. It is time it conceded the merit of the health unions' pay claim and brought this tragic dispute to an end.

The Confederation of Health Service Employees
General Secretary: Albert Spanswick,
Glen House, High Street, Banstead, Surrey SM7 2LH

COHSE: Britain's Health Service Union

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

New Statesman

Vol 104 No 2691 15 October 1982

Hunt's cable stitch

LORD HUNT HAS had a lifetime's experience as a civil servant, of drafting reports that reconcile conflicting vested interests, while showing policians how to get what it is that they want. And it shows in his committee's report on the future of cable television. The report is condemned out of its own words. It correctly declares 'that decisions which must be taken in relation to cable expansion are of great significance' and that 'it is of crucial importance that the right decisions are taken'.

This is an understatement. For the decisions that the government will now rush through on the basis of this report will be the biggest single determinant of the kind of television and broadcasting that we shall get in this country into the next century. The quality of that television is absolutely central to questions about the kind of society we want.

Television is far more critical to politics and democracy than all the other branches of the media put together. Yet the blue-print that has come out of the Hunt Committee, while guaranteed to satisfy the ill-informed, commercial instincts of the present government, is quite simply an inadequate study of the issues involved. Its 33 pages of 'argument' about the future of cable and the potential impact on the whole wider context of broadcasting ought not to be dignified by being called a report of a committee of inquiry. It is a 'job' that has been done for the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary – no more and no less.

To be fair to Lord Hunt and his colleagues their terms of reference and the time they were given made it unlikely that they could do the job properly. It is disgraceful that Mr Whitelaw should have set up a committee of this kind on a subject of such importance and required it to take evidence, conduct its research and present its report, all within six months. All that the Home Secretary wanted was a fig-leaf of a report to cover industrial and commercial decisions already taken in principle by the Prime Minister, who has become obsessed with the quaint notion that running television cables over large parts of the country will produce a regeneration of the British economy, led by the private sector, if possible before the next election.

Lord Hunt's report would have had greater intellectual integrity if it had admitted that it had not really considered the social and political consequences of the proposals being made. Blame for this, however, must be shared by many other sections of society. It is also a disgrace, for example, that the Labour Party failed even to bring itself to make a submission to the Hunt Committee, let alone demand and lead a discussion of the public interest issues involved. In the prevailing atmosphere of ignorance and apparent indifference to the revolution in telecommunications now taking place, the present Tory government in great haste and substantial secrecy is stamping a particular brand of narrow American-style commercialism on the future of British broadcasting. The change of direction has been so sudden and, when it emerged, so blatant that it has driven the BBC and the IBA – both institutions normally sycophantic towards (particularly Tory) governments – to protest publicly. Yet, in general, the Left has failed to grasp the significance of what is happening.

THERE ARE TWO fundamental objections to the entire Downing Street/Department of Industry approach to the issue of cable. The first is technical. Questions of broadcasting ought not to be confused (as deliberately they have been) with decisions about the future of cable communications. The costs of cabling up substantial parts of the country can only be justified for programmes for data transmission, commercial transactions, interactive services for customers, on-line market research and other such activities. So far as programme transmission is concerned, the future lies with satellite transmission, not with cable at all.

Even with cable, this government is pushing us pell-mell into an obsolescent technology of copper cables. If part of the argument for boosting cable is that it promotes an industry of the future, that cabled future lies not with copper but with fibre optics. Once again vested industrial interests have persuaded a British government to commit a major national industrial and electronic project down a road that will give the country as a whole no long-term commercial benefits.

The second objection to the Hunt approach is that it totally fails to face the fact that commercial pressures and the profit motive (whatever they may do in retailing and other parts of the economy) do not increase consumer choice in broadcasting. The idea that a multiplicity of entrepreneurs, operating a multiplicity of channels, will open up realistic possibilities for 24-hour news and current affairs, for minority interest and ethnic stations, for access by public interest groups to a wider audience – all this is total fantasy. What is more, Lord Hunt only had to look at the situation in the United States to see what unresisted commercial pressures do to programme content.

In the recent past there has been enough justified criticism about the inadequacy of the IBA in resisting commercial pressures and of the BBC for also becoming hooked out of pride and fear for its licence increases into the same 'ratings war'. The new cable industry, on Hunt's recommendation, would have a regulatory body compared with which the IBA would appear a strict Victorian aunt.

Yet British broadcasting – in news and current affairs, in drama, in documentary, both in the BBC and some ITV companies – has preserved a reputation for quality and innovation of a high order. Even in commercial terms, for this very reason the rest of the world buys more television programmes from Britain than it is ever likely to buy copper cables. The Hunt formula for cable will subject the whole structure of broadcasting to pressure in the direction of Americanised television, as the lowest common denominator imposes its way with commercial inevitability. There are not many things in which we have an existing reputation as a world leader. After Hunt, the likelihood is that there will be one less. □

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Cover-up on asbestos victims

INVESTIGATIONS carried out in the course of making Yorkshire TV's asbestos documentary 'Alice: A Fight for Life' show that death certificates often do not mention asbestos diseases even when the coroner has conclusive and documented evidence that they were the cause of death. As a consequence, spouses and relatives have been prevented from claiming compensation and the statistics on the true levels of death from asbestos cancer and disease are significantly reduced.

The system of coroner's courts and inquest procedures, is already under attack after the Blair Peach and Deptford Fire inquests, for its lack of public accountability, of proper forensic procedures to establish cause of death and of legal safeguards for the relatives of the dead. Next Tuesday, Christopher Price MP will attempt to introduce a Bill to reform the system.

In each of the cases of inaccurate death certificates in Yorkshire TV's dossier, the coroner involved certified the cause of death wrongly, before he had received vital evidence. When the reports of the real cause of death became known to him, he made no attempt to correct his hasty certification or to inform the next of kin. The deaths in question were all among workers at Turner and Newall's asbestos factory in Rochdale, Lancashire.

Natural Causes

Influential studies carried out by Oxford Cancer specialists Sir Richard Doll and Julian Peto at this factory have relied on death certificates as evidence of the effectiveness of the Government's dust control limits for the whole of the asbestos industry. When cases from Yorkshire TV's dossier were shown to Mr Peto he described the inaccuracies they documented as 'spectacular.'

Margaret Priestley was certified by a government medical panel as suffering from a 70 per cent disability caused by asbestosis. Coroner Mr Leonard Gorodkin certified the cause of her death as 'bronchopneumonia and fibrosis of both lungs.' He did not mention the words asbestosis or industrial disease.

He issued the death certificate without waiting for the vital post mortem evidence from the Pneumonconiosis Medical Panel (PMP) who had awarded Mrs Priestley asbestosis benefit while she was alive. The PMP decides whether widows are entitled to the Industrial Death Benefit of 55p a week. Their verdict is the key to successful compensation claims against the employer. They carried out a post mortem on Mrs Priestley – two weeks after her death certificate was issued. The result – 'death due to asbestosis.'

Margaret Priestley: a laughing jolly woman who turned into a thin gaunt shadow

Robert Maitland was a loyal Turner's manager who died in June 1978. He was certified as being chronically disabled by asbestosis during his lifetime. His death certificate, again issued by Mr Gorodkin, makes no mention of asbestosis. His widow, who has died herself, therefore made no effort to sue. A month after he died, the PMP carried out a post mortem in which they found Mr Maitland had died from 'asbestosis and cancer of the lung.' When Mr Gorodkin received this report he filed it away without attempting to contact Mrs Maitland to tell her of her changed legal circumstances.

Teddy Wellings, another Rochdale asbestos worker, died in July 1981. By that time all coroners had received a circular from the Home Office (No 18/1980) expressing the hope that 'coroners will postpone their own conclusions on the cause of death until the advice of the Pneumoconiosis Medical Panel is available.' Despite the clarity of this advice, the new Rochdale coroner, Mr John Bryan Cousen North, certified Mr Welling's death as due to heart disease and bronchitis without waiting for the PMP's post mortem report. This, when it arrived, gave the cause of death as 'cancer of the lung and asbestosis.'

Natural Causes

His widow, Mrs Jessie Wellings, had begged for an inquest to be held and yet, contrary to Home Office instructions issued in an earlier circular, the coroner refused to take her request into account. She was not informed of the contents of the PMP's report. When whe discovered after repeated requests that the report with the true cause of death had been sitting in the Coroner's files for several months, Mrs Wellings said angrily: 'It's not fair for him to have suffered with it (asbestosis) for so long and for them to put heart attack on the death certificate. Someone's getting away with murder.'

Emma Marshall: The death of Mrs Marshall, a part-time office cleaner at Turner and Newall's Rochdale plant who did not work directly with asbestos, was deeply embarrassing for the firm. She died of mesothelioma, the cancer of the pleura (lung lining) almost invariably associated with asbestos exposure. At the inquest, Turner and Newall's representatives argued she could not possibly have developed mesothelioma as a result of asbestos exposure. The Coroner brought in a verdict of 'natural causes' rather than 'industrial disease'. She died in 1972. In 1982 a study of Rochdale mesothelioma cases in last month's *British Medical Journal* clearly included Mrs Marshall as 'case 12 who had been employed part-time to clean the offices'. Preserved specimens from her lungs had been found to contain a most unnatural 28 million white asbestos fibres per gramme. Mrs Marshall's daughter and her solicitor are now optimistic about claiming compensation.

All these cases are from Rochdale where there is considerable experience in detecting industrial diseases.

Alex Watts was an asbestos cement worker from Royston, Hertfordshire. He was certified as an asbestosis sufferer 15 years before he died in June 1978. His death certificate mentions only bronchopneumonia, emphysema and osteoarthritis. The doctor, Paul Harper, knew Mr Watts had been receiving a pension for asbestosis but didn't think it necessary to notify the coroner or registrar. Dr Harper is the part-time company doctor of Eternit Building Products Limited, the asbestos cement company where Mr Watts was employed for 30 years.

Natural Causes

Dr Harper told Yorkshire Television Company, perhaps without realising the seriousness of what he had done, that he and the company had known that Mr Watts had died from asbestosis but hadn't felt it necessary to record this on the death certificate. 'It was thoroughly investigated pre-death, the whole situation was quite satisfactory, sewn up and both Eternit and Eternit insurers were completely aware that this man had died from asbestos-related disease.' He said the widow, Mrs Watts, would have been 'distressed in having to make a statement to a solicitor, going through the drudgery of actually proceeding with the case . . .'

Mrs Watts remembers her husband's last days vividly. 'Belsen had nothing on him . . . he couldn't lie down with the pain.' □

James Cutler

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Ruling Militant out of bounds

FOUR OF the nine Militant supporters who have been selected as prospective Parliamentary candidates could be 'de-selected' if the proposals of the Boundary Commission go through. The four – Messrs Mulhearn, Hatton, Fields, and Harrison – are all prospective Labour candidates for Liverpool, where all the constituency boundaries are to be changed. The eight existing parliamentary seats are to be replaced by six new constituencies.

All Labour prospective candidates in Liverpool will therefore have to have new selection conferences and the challenge to the four Militant supporters will be stronger than when they were first selected. Apart from any impact of the register, there will be opposition from the new 'soft Left' in some Liverpool wards who resent Militant's authoritarian style. (The executive of the Labour Co-ordinating Committee, better liked by the soft Left, has already decided to recommend registration to its members.)

However, even if Militant loses strength in the wards, it could still rely on backing from trade union delegates on the General Committee and the District Labour Party. In the end, the saviour of the Militant Four may be the Labour Party leadership itself. If it succeeds in its legal bid to stop the boundaries being changed before the next General Election, the candidatures of the four will be secure.

Steve Walker

Now then, now then . . .

POLICE OFFICERS whose patience, courtesy and good humour fail them, and who rely too much on the assertion of authority, are disobeying their own rules. Expected standards of police behaviour are laid out quite explicitly in the 'Bobby's Bible' – the Met's Instruction Book which the *Observer* first publicised last Sunday.

The Book a copy of which has been passed to the *New Statesman*, clarifies where police are expected to make discretionary decisions and where they have clearly gone against the rules laid down for their guidance. For instance, it instructs police that young persons should only be interviewed in the presence of their parents or guardians; that 'reasonable arrangements' must be made for the refreshment of people being questioned, and that a person giving a statement 'shall always be asked whether he wishes to write down himself what he wants to say.' If he doesn't, the officer 'shall take down the exact words spoken by the person.' It emphasises, in capital letters, that police are under a special obligation TO INFORM THE COURT OF FACTS WHICH TELL IN FAVOUR OF THE ACCUSED. Confessions must not be induced – and says the guide 'the burden is on the prosecution to prove that the confession was free and voluntary.'

Despite the detailed guides on some subjects – such as the list of 'Privileged Persons' who are immune from prosecution (all Royalty, foreign or homegrown) – other areas of public concern get scant attention. In sexual attacks, officers are warned to take 'particular care' in cases of common assaults between husband and wife. If a man is seen pressing up against females in a crowd, the officer is expected to go off and find another constable and return to stare at the offensive man – but not to intervene voluntarily. Someone who believes himself to be the victim of racism, even when witnessed by an officer, is to be advised to take the complaint to the CRE. Officers are warned, however, that all people who are coloured or have foreign-sounding names are not necessarily non-patrials, and should not therefore be asked for their passports when suspected of minor offences.

The instructions reveal that the Ministry of Defence have contingency plans for an aircraft carrying nuclear weapons crashing on London – which implies such aircraft are not being routed away from the capital. If a military aircraft crashes, police are told to ring the RAF Operations Room at the Ministry of Defence and ask if nuclear weapons were on board. A Special Safety Team, it says, will be 'despatched immediately' from 24-hour standby at key nuclear bases.

Sarah Benton & Duncan Campbell

MISCELLANY

Dirty days at Blackpool

The days of promenading by Blackpool's golden sands for the labour movement's delegates may be numbered. For Blackpool, host to scores of free-spending trade union and Labour Party conferences, is planning to have its dirt cleaned up by private contractors. NUPE thinks about 230 jobs will disappear if the council puts its street cleaning and refuse collection out to contract. Last Friday the union's divisional council in the area called on labour movement bodies to 'withdraw any plans to use Blackpool as a conference centre' if Blackpool goes ahead with privatisation plans. The union is particularly upset that Tory leader Herbert Cocherall is driving ahead with the scheme when workers accepted productivity proposals last year, saving the council £100,000.

Having a party

The political party which isn't a political party but is rather – according to its wetter members – a mere supporters' rally is in fact becoming the Greatest Show on Earth. Last week 8,723 people attended the Conservative Party's four-day 'conference' in Brighton. Most of them were quite content with their walk-on parts, duly recorded by 1,230 jostling members of the media. 4,222 of the rest were representatives, handpicked by the constituency associations of the party that believes internal democracy must be forced into the trade unions. Backstage there were 2,310 Observers from industry, particularly keen to be there this year because, said Conservative Central Office, 'of the feeling that there will definitely be a General Election within the year'. That gives enough time for the loyalists to cover up the impact of the unprecedented alternative draft manifesto which the Tory Reform Group plans to launch on an unreceptive party this November. The TRG is now the frontrunner for the political campaign most unlikely to succeed before 1984.

Tory house-keeping

Still on Mrs Thatcher's favourite subject of people keeping their house in order, especially their budgets, she should now be considering putting two-thirds of the Conservative constituency associations out to private contract. For out of 532 listed, a sorry 344 failed to reach their financial quota in 1981-82, meaning only 64 per cent of the national quota target was reached. Or so it would seem. Both the man from Conservative Central Office and the one behind the Board of Finance's conference stall confessed that, without expert advice, they were quite mystified as to how quotas were set or finances organised and recorded. According to the agent for top-of-the-league Aylesbury, which raised £21,165 last year (putting it in line for the top prize of 'Leader's Letter with Golden Ribbon Signed and Framed') it's all down to simple efficiency and good management. How then should we regard the housekeeping skills of the 85 associations, including Conservative strongholds Cheltenham and Aldershot, which failed to raise a single penny for their quota?

1 versus 4,222

While applications to be an Observer are carefully checked by Central Office to make sure they come from reputable firms it seems a growing band of left-wing media personnel now find the event irresistible. (The Conference is like nothing so much as the Annual Outing of a large and indolent private company congratulating itself hypnotically on its splendid performance over the year). But one lone dissident vote was registered at the end of each debate, to be duly recorded, one assumes, in the annals of Conservative Party history. The *NS* must now reveal that the hand belonged to a communist film technician who, on the few occasions the ceremonial vote was called for, dropped the end of the lead he was carrying to raise his hand high in protest. Is this a case for the introduction of the secret postal ballot?

South African connection

Two years ago, in August 1980, the *New Statesman* identified Mr Ben van der Klashorst, a First Secretary at the South African Embassy in London, as the man who headed the South African National Intelligence Service's operation for gathering news in this country about individuals and organisations opposed to apartheid. At the time, Mr van der Klashorst claimed he was working for the South African Department of Foreign Affairs in Pretoria. The Department claimed they had never heard of him. Anti-Apartheid promptly wrote to the Foreign Office to ask what action they were going to take over this evidence of espionage activities having been carried out in Britain by a foreign state. Mr Richard Luce replied that he was satisfied that no purpose would be served by carrying out a full investigation and that 'you may be sure that everything required for the protection of Britain's interests in these matters has been and will continue to be done'. Two weeks ago, after two men were charged with criminal conspiracy connected to the break-in at the ANC's offices in London last March, Mr van der Klashorst was suddenly flown home. He was identified in South Africa last week as a security agent.

Mary Rose scuppers archaeologists

Loud applause greeted the raising of the Mary Rose from the Solent this week; so much so, indeed, that it was a surprise not to hear Mrs Thatcher exhorting us all to 're-joice'. But the cheering was not as universal as it may have seemed. Many underwater archaeologists are unhappy at the way in which the Mary Rose has hogged all the limelight – and the money. The Institute of Maritime Archaeology at St Andrew's University may soon close for want of a few thousand pounds. The cost of the Mary Rose operation so far is £4.5 million.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Hunt ball for cable companies

ALTHOUGH fearing the worst about the outcome of the Hunt Committee's Inquiry on the Expansion of Cable Television, the IBA and the BBC have professed themselves 'shocked and surprised' at the Committee's recommendations, published this week. The Committee has advocated a virtual 'free-for-all', which in the words of one senior IBA official 'incorporates no effective controls whatsoever'. In an unprecedented reaction, the IBA stated that it 'totally dissents from the central recommendations of the report'.

Ian McCallum, Chairman of the Association of District Councils, described the move to deprive local authorities of their statutory powers as 'a major threat to local democracy and accountability'. According to Alan Sapper, General Secretary of the ACTT, the report 'makes the old licence to print money look like a kindergarten exercise . . . it is a *carte blanche* for speculators'.

But the most disturbing of the committee's recommendations was their approval for local cable operators to own *and* to programme their own cable systems. In the USA this has led to local cable systems only putting on programmes owned by their parent companies, thus depriving their subscribers of competitors' programme services. Inexplicably, the Hunt Committee feels that the problems caused by this 'vertical integration' would not be serious in the UK. This despite the fact that two of the biggest cable operators, British Electric Traction and Thorn-EMI have major interests in *Thames Television*. Similarly, *Granada Television* has already announced that it wishes to operate cable systems: if allowed to proceed it could prevent other programme companies' services from gaining access to its cables.

The cable companies were delighted by the report, which represents a major victory for the Department of Industry over the Home Office. But the committee's recommendations have elicited such strong reactions from the BBC and the IBA that the government will now have to proceed in the teeth of their fierce and open opposition. However, it is widely accepted that the Cabinet has backed the case for minimal restrictions on commercial exploitation of cable. If, as is likely, the Hunt Committee's recommendations are accepted by the government, cable television operators will operate in the UK under a markedly more liberal regime, and with far fewer controls, than they do in even the USA. Those unfortunate enough to have seen the appalling programming on American cable television can now only mourn the almost inevitable demise of public service broadcasting in this country.

Michael Pilsworth

Forcing Labour into the bunkers

THE HOME OFFICE last week revealed its plans to fight back against Labour Councils and other authorities who have declared themselves 'nuclear-free'. Their resistance to civil defence plans was responsible for the cancellation of 'Hard Rock', the civil defence exercise planned for early October.

The government is drafting a series of new regulations under the 1948 Civil Defence Act. If they are agreed by Parliament, they will force local authorities to:

- Build and maintain a bunker headquarters;
- Train employees of local authorities to do civil defence tasks, whether they like it or not;
- Take part in exercises like *Hard Rock*, however absurd they may be;
- Link up with voluntary organisations like 'Civil Aid', the Scouts and the Guides, as well as established groups like the Red Cross.

Local authorities have been sent details of the Home Office proposals for 'consultation', which lasts until 10 December. Thereafter, the Home Office has said, it wants to rush the new regulations through Parliament before the end of the year. But so far local authorities have not been shown the actual regulations.

A letter containing details of the regulations was rushed out last Wednesday, just in time for Home Office minister Patrick Mayhew to make a speech on the subject to a fringe meeting at the Tories' Brighton Conference.

The new regulations will still face a major legal difficulty even if they are passed by Parliament. The difficulty was identified in a QC's report prepared for the Greater London Council last July. This pointed out that before any authority obeyed the government by making civil defence plans, the government had first to provide details of the likely pattern of attack. Since this would mean implicitly confirming that its 'stay-at-home' advice in the derided *Protect and Survive* pamphlet was an invitation to nuclear suicide, the Home Office may well be reluctant to give exact details of the kind, of attack it expects.

Duncan Campbell

Goodbye sailors

LAST WEEK's decision by BP to cut its tanker fleet by a third with the loss of 1000 ratings and 300 officers has caused more than the predictable anger in the National Union of Seamen (NUS). BP has, within the last decade, signed long-term contracts with several foreign 'flag-of-convenience' shipping firms in spite of its claims now that its own tanker fleet is too large. BP maintains that it 'must operate in profitability', which means using ships crewed with non-unionised labour from Liberia, Greece and Panama.

According to the NUS, BP has chartered vessels under five foreign flags for its profitable cross-trade routes between foreign countries. Meanwhile, NUS statistics show that the British percentage of world shipping dropped from 82 per cent in the mid-fifties to just over four per cent last year. The union's Assistant General Secretary, Sam McCluskey, points out that France, Mexico, Sweden and even Thatcherite America have passed legislation to protect their shipping.

The BP announcement has brought the NUS closer to the Officers' Association. Their spokesman John Newman questions BP's reasoning that cutting back the tanker fleet will somehow save it. More than 60 per cent of British shipping, he says, depends on cross-trade to survive, and Britain will find it very difficult to recover these markets if it allows this decline in the merchant fleet.

John Maple, BP spokesman, admitted on the BBC World Service that the cuts were harsh, but suggested that British seafarers should consider emigrating as their skills were much sought after abroad. Meanwhile, redundancy notices will be awaiting returning seamen, some coming from as far away as the Falkland Islands.

Michael Lewis

Heseltine country

POVERTY is spreading so fast in the Merseyside region that a breakdown in the administration of social security is being predicted by some welfare agencies. 'For Whose Benefit', a report just published by two trade unions, shows that over the last two years the number of people in Merseyside living on or below the poverty line has increased by over a third to 304,611 while the number of staff dealing with claimants has been cut by four per cent.

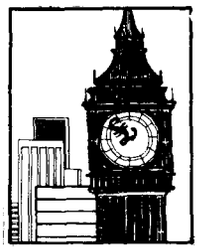
Last week, staff from DHSS offices in Birmingham were on strike after a DHSS officer broke down under the strain of having to deal hurriedly with an endless flow of people. 'For Whose Benefit', published by the Civil and Public Servants Association and the Society of Civil and Public Servants, says that the workload on DHSS staff in Merseyside has increased by 70 per cent in the last two years. Most offices only keep up through a huge increase in overtime working, including Saturdays and Sundays. The CPSA has organised a series of pickets on offices working overtime. In a recent ballot on the question of cuts, CPSA members in Merseyside DHSS voted 931 to 530 in favour of all-out strike action.

Despite the overtime, staff are not keeping up with demand. The system of visiting claimants has been virtually abandoned, with some 595 claimants waiting for a visit in Toxteth, and 669 in the North End of Liverpool. A total of 3,589 cases were awaiting action at the time the report was written. DHSS office phones are permanently jammed, says the report, and there are delays of several weeks in processing applications. Meanwhile the government has put extra resources into the new specialist fraud sections.

The workload would be much higher were it not for the 100,000 people who, it is estimated, do not claim benefits to which they are entitled. Some £4½ million annually is going unclaimed in Liverpool, suggests the report. But a circular from the DHSS to the unions, written in May this year, says that 'because the government is firmly committed to reducing the size of the civil service, we cannot introduce large-scale take-up initiatives.'

Steve Munby

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



PETER KELLNER, Political Editor

How the Gang of Four have duped the SDP

ONE OF THE oldest maxims for cynical politicians is: state something often enough, and voters may start to believe it. During the past ten days, the statement that leading Social Democratic politicians have been making more often than any other is that their party has a separate, distinct identity.

This assertion is delivered occasionally with conviction (particularly by David Owen), but never with evidence. 'Never', I know, is a dangerous word; but on your behalf your Political Editor has read more SDP bumf in the past week than your average socially-concerned law-abiding citizen should be required to absorb in a lifetime. At no point have I found a principled explanation of the need for the SDP to exist separately from the Liberals.

('Principled' is one of the SDP's buzz words at the party's rolling conference this week. Whenever someone wants to justify some tired old policy as exciting, new, breaking-the-mould politics, he or she applies the word 'principled' as if applying Brillo to a grimy saucepan. Thus we are offered a 'principled' statutory incomes policy, 'principled' union-bashing legislation and so on).

Two non-principled explanations for the separate existence of the SDP may be acknowledged. It has a different history from the Liberals, and it has leaders who are personally too arrogant to work their passage inside the Liberal Party.

These arguments, however, apply almost exclusively to the SDP leadership. Shirley Williams partly gave the game away in her Presidential address:

> We in the SDP sometimes feel we have a greater awareness of the constraints that governing imposes, of the tough choices of policy and priorities it requires, than some of our Liberal allies.

By 'we in the SDP', Mrs Williams does not – cannot – mean the general membership, most of whom have never been involved in politics before. Mrs Williams's 'we' are the four people who served as cabinet ministers in the last Labour government and, if we are charitable, a dozen or so others with junior ministerial experience. If the majority of SDP members are political virgins, then its leaders are political philanderers; this week Mrs Williams came clean about which group she identifies with.

FOR THE ordinary member, and even more for the potential member, it will be increasingly inadequate to justify the separate existence of the SDP merely as a fan-club for the Gang of Four. Dr Owen seems to appreciate this point more than the other three.

Last week he devoted most of a major speech in Milton Keynes to attacking the Conservative Party chairman, Cecil Parkinson, for saying at the Tory Party conference that the Alliance 'want to be treated as a single entity now and that is how I shall treat them'. Not so, said Dr Owen: 'We are not a single entity.' And: 'The fact is that the SDP is a separate party constitutionally and politically.' And: 'It is vitally important that Mr Parkinson is not allowed to present us as one Party.' And: 'We do not have "Alliance" spokesmen . . . our parties stem from different traditions and have their own identities.'

When it comes to defining the SDP's identity, however, Dr Owen has problems. He referred me to his chapter in a new book out this week, *The rebirth of Britain**. Dr Owen's chapter does indeed elaborate on the need to keep the Liberal Party and the SDP separate; but his argument essentially concerns tactics rather than principle. Dr Owen writes:

> We should guard against our present two-party alliance becoming before the next election, *de facto*, a single Alliance party. The two old parties would welcome such a development. They would find it far easier to narrow down an Alliance party into a small centrist band of opinion, but far harder with a two-party alliance to weaken both the distinctive traditional Liberal appeal and the distinctive new Social Democratic appeal which we have built up since our foundation.

Briefly, Dr Owen's argument is that under a system of proportional representation, two parties working loosely together will perform better than one. It is the same reason why Proctor and Gamble make similar detergents under different brand names: to take up more supermarket shelf-space, and to attract, overall, a greater share of detergent sales.

Dr Owen would doubtless dispute this characterisation of the 'separate identity' argument. Yet the point remains that whenever any leading SDP member has attempted to define the party's concept of social democracy, he or she has invariably produced a form of words to which any leading Liberal would subscribe. Take Dr Owen again. His vision of a social democratic society is:

> one where individuals have declared rights and can achieve their full potential, where a sense of community thrives on the open acceptance of duties, obligations and responsibility for others, and where effort is respected no less than altruism is revered and encouraged.

The only thing a Liberal could demur from in that is its pomposity.

THERE IS, of course, a respectable reason why the SDP should not shout too loud about any differences with the Liberals that do exist. Critics of the Alliance would be tempted to exploit those differences in order to discredit it. The SDP, though, cannot have it both ways. If it seriously contends that its political philosophy is different from the Liberals, it should have enough confidence to explain that difference and withstand the criticism. If, on the other hand, no such difference exists (as David Marquand maintained at one of the fringe meetings in Cardiff) then the SDP should stop banging on about its 'distinct identity' and admit that its reasons for not merging with the Liberals are mainly tactical and personal.

For what it's worth, I think there are some differences of policy and attitude between the Liberals and the SDP. The Liberals tends to be more hostile than the SDP to nuclear power and nuclear weapons. On the evidence of their Assembly at Bournemouth, they are also keener than the SDP to bring the police under local control. They also want voting rights at 16. On these issues, the Liberal Party – though not its leader, David Steel – is clearly more radical than the SDP.

Perhaps the biggest difference, though, lies in the time-scales of the two parties. The Liberals are used to not having national power. They would like power, of course; but if forced to choose between political principle and political ambition, most of them would prefer to maintain their principles. Their party may not flourish but it will survive.

The SDP, on the other hand, is much more about power – and not power in some distant future, but power either after the next general election, or the election after that. It is difficult not to be impressed, and sometimes amazed, by the confident feeling that many SDP members at its rolling conference this week have of belonging to the party about to take office. The greatest achievement of the Gang of Four has been to foster that illusion and the enthusiasm that goes with it. All the guff about 'separate identity' and 'distinct principles' is a confidence trick. And when, after electoral failure, SDP members see how they have been duped, their vengeance will be a joy for socialists – and, I suspect, Liberals – to behold. □

*Edited by Wayland and Kennet; Weidenfeld & Nicholson; £5.95.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE

The knives are out

Mrs Thatcher says that the health service is 'safe' in her hands. Is it? Patrick Wintour and Francis Wheen look at Tory attitudes to the NHS

THIS GOVERNMENT's first public expenditure White Paper announced that: 'Public expenditure is at the heart of Britain's economic problems'. It has now come to be at the heart of the Tories' own political problems. The uproar over the 'Think Tank' report has underlined the persistent policy block running through Tory strategy – existing commitments to welfare spending during a prolonged recession mean that public expenditure, as a proportion of Gross National Product, must rise. Under the Tories, public expenditure as a proportion of GDP has done just that – from 41 to 45 per cent. During the same period, tax as a proportion of GDP has risen from 34 to 39 per cent.

The government's dilemma can only get worse. Most of the simple cuts have already been made. So health, education and the real level of social security benefits are the only major areas that can still be cut, if Tories are to meet their borrowing and expenditure targets. Without economic growth, the welfare state must be dismantled.

At the centre of the crisis is the National Health Service. The common and ignorant assumption within the Tory Party is that the NHS, funded predominantly by general taxation, is unique and that most other countries rely heavily on voluntary insurance systems with only minimal government involvement. A central bureaucracy like the NHS leads inexorably, it is said, to an avaricious appetite for public money. (NHS expenditure as a proportion of GNP has indeed risen steadily from 3.9 per cent in 1949 to 6.1 per cent in 1980.)

Tories have searched for a market solution to their crisis. Sir Geofrrey Howe personally favours a two-tier health service. In 1970, Howe was a member of a British Medical Association inquiry into NHS finances, which advocated such a scheme. One tier would be compulsory and provide basic cover. The second would be for those who chose and could afford to opt out into a scheme which would offer higher benefits. In addition, it was supposed that competition in private health would lower costs. Howe repeated similar views to the Royal Society of Health last year.

The then Tory opposition health spokesman, Patrick Jenkin, also advocated reforming the finances of the NHS. In 1976 he asked the following rhetorical question:

> Britain is the only country in the world which runs a highly centralised health system, financed largely by taxation which is free at the point of service. Britain is the only country in the world where patients have to face the torments of the waiting list. Is this pure coincidence, or is there a link?

Press Association

Mrs T, minus varicose veins, leaves hospital

In 1977 he answered his own question: 'In the longer term I believe we should seek ways of transferring more of the cost of the health service from taxes to insurance.'

However, once the Tories came to power they discovered that increases in health spending were an international phenomenon that had little to do with whether it was financed by insurance or by central taxation. Statutory insurance systems, anyway, differ little from tax: they still involved a compulsory levy on employer and employee.

The economics are explained by Alan Maynard:

> The designs of health systems, both socialist and private, have tended to reduce the price barriers to consumption to the patient and have ensured that cost constraints on producers, in particular doctors, are minimal: the costs are borne by insurers, sickness funds or the taxpayers, ie the third party pays. Patients are encouraged to maximise consumption regardless of costs and doctors to maximise benefits regardless of costs.

The NHS through its control of hospitals and the general practitioner service, which screens potential patients, has a better awareness of supply costs than most medical systems. In the US, where almost half of health care is financed through the private sector, health spending has increased to almost 10 per cent of GNP, from just 5 per cent in 1960. In France the recent average annual increase in health expenditure has been 17 per cent. In Germany, at one stage in the 1970s, health expenditure was rising by 20 per cent every year. Most European governments have also found themselves increasingly drawn into subsidising expenditure on health. According to the OECD in Paris, the proportion of total health expenditure in Europe met from public funds increased from 55 per cent to 70 per cent between 1962 and 1980.

A government-commissioned report from the Nuffield Provincial Hospitals Trust, published last week, points to the increasingly desperate attempts of European governments to control health costs. It pointed out that increased government concern to contain health costs has in fact led to increased government involvement in health provision. 'Every Western European country now has a regional plan for hospitals and all hospitals, public and private, must conform to it. If a hospital wished to develop or extend a service then permission must be sought; and if new equipment is involved then an authorising certificate must be obtained from the regional office of the relevant Ministry'. This trend goes diametrically against current Tory dogma.

Similar concerns were expressed at an International Social Security Association conference held in Finland a fortnight ago, with DHSS representatives present. The chief topic was cost cutting by better planning of resources and changed payment systems for hospitals and doctors. One of the organisers said: 'The countries having real problems were those with health systems based on insurance: in these countries demand is subsidised by insurance. Most Europeans envy the British'. The Italians have already moved to a health system financed by general tax.

DESPITE THIS EVIDENCE, resentment of the NHS among the Tory rank and file remains strong. Two particular prejudices stand out.

The first is that it makes people think they are more ill than they are. Enoch Powell, writing about his period as Minister of Health, reflected this concern that the NHS feeds the nation's collective hypochondria: 'There is virtually no limit to the amount of medicine an individual is capable of absorbing. The appetite for medical treatment *vient en mangeant.*' In fact, in Britain most of the increased in health demand has been caused by demographic changes. Between 1951 and 1980 the number of people over the age of 65 rose by more than half. Elderly people need more care. In 1980, for example, £545 was spent on hospital or community services for each person aged 75 or

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

over, compared with the national average of £115 per person. The government estimates that it needs to spend an extra 0.7 per cent each year just to keep up with the forecast rise in the number of old people.

A second Tory prejudice is that the NHS is inefficient. During the parliamentary debate on the health workers' dispute, Tory backbenchers seized on the growth in the number of NHS staff. In 1949 there were 400,000; today there are 822,000. But the Royal Commission on the Health Service, reporting in 1979, was wary of crude comparisons of efficiency. Norman Fowler, the Secretary of State, has tried to mollify his backbenchers by asking Regional Health Authorities for 'efficiency savings'. He is also making further savings through the back door by asking RHAs to fund part of this year's wage increase within existing budgets. Moreover, Fowler hopes that the current reorganisation of the NHS, removing one of the administrative tiers, will save £30 million – 10 per cent of the NHS's administrative budget.

The fact is, however, that the NHS is cheap to run. An OECD study in the mid-1970s showed that in Britain administrative costs were only 2.6 per cent of health expenditure, compared to 10.8 per cent in France and 10.6 per cent in Belgium. This is not surprising. The NHS is financed through the general tax system, while in European countries special insurance funds duplicate the work of tax collectors.

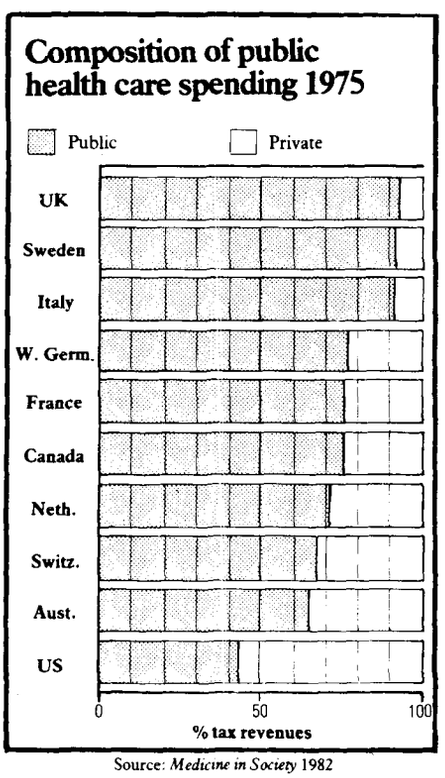
CONSERVATIVES HAVE NOT always been prejudiced against the NHS. The 1945 Tory conference passed a motion 'welcoming the government's decision to make a comprehensive National Health Service available to all'. Since then, the Tories have often gone out of their way to emphasise their 'support' for the NHS. Even when blessing private health schemes, they are careful to say that such schemes should not – and cannot – supplant the NHS.

Indeed, Tories have sometimes suggested that their party's record on the NHS is actually better than Labour's. 'Conservatives have proved to be good friends of the NHS,' Patrick Jenkin wrote in the *Contemporary Review* in 1978. Similarly, Sir Keith Joseph, then in charge of the DHSS, told the Tory conference in 1973:

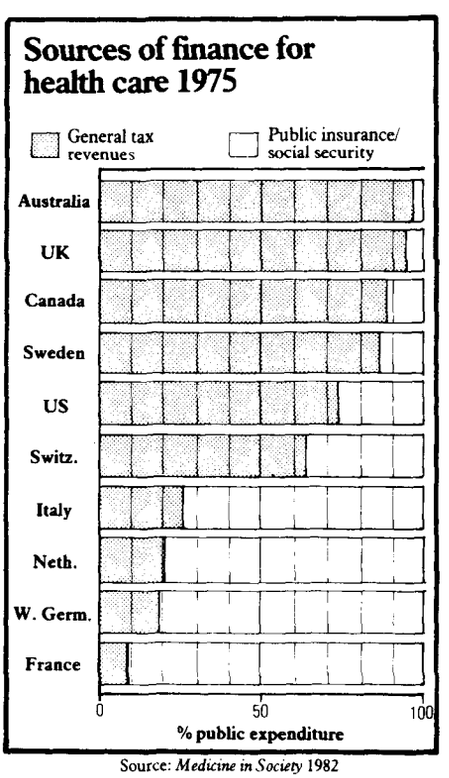
> The real buying power of the National Health Service and the local authority Social Service Departments, in our current four years, is rising from year to year at a rate 40 per cent higher than it was in Labour's central four years, year by year. In other words, we are spending more in real terms than Labour ever managed to do.

This bipartisan support for the NHS has infuriated some of the crustier right-wingers, both in politics and in the medical profession. For example, Sir Reginald Murley, president of the Royal College of Surgeons between 1977 and 1980, describes the creation of the NHS in these terms: 'With a spate of tendentious propaganda, *supported by politicians of all parties*, a State near-monopoly was created.' (our italics.) Sir Reginald's no-nonsense view is that 'government intervention does not better satisfy the needs of the public for medical care'.

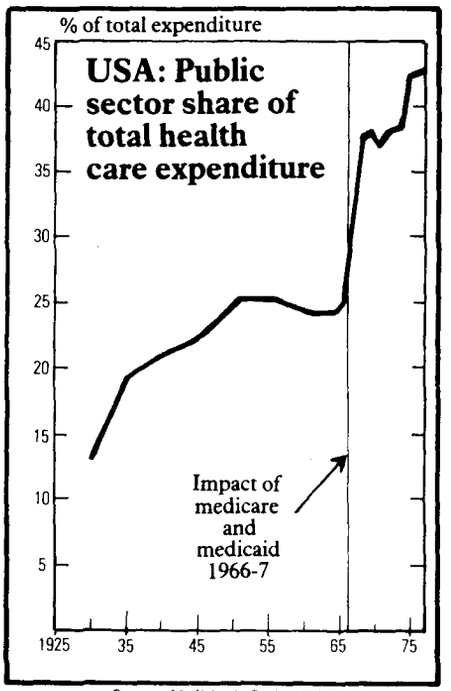
For many years the people who were actually prepared to question the fundamentals of the NHS were a lonely bunch. The most persistent was Arthur Seldon, co-director of the Institute of Economic Affairs. Sir Reginald Murley thinks that Seldon 'has done more than almost anyone in Britain to persuade a starry-eyed folk of the errors and evils of massive governmental intervention in medicine and education'. For over 20 years the IEA, under the leadership of Seldon and Ralph Harris, has fired darts at the welfare state. As long ago as 1961 it published *Health Through Choice* by D. S. Lees, an economics lecturer, who argued that 'medical care is a personal consumption "good" and as such is a dubious candidate for collective provision'. If hospitals were transferred to private ownership, 'competition' and 'consumer choice' would be enlarged.



Source: *Medicine in Society* 1982



Source: *Medicine in Society* 1982



Source: *Medicine in Society* 1982

The IEA repeated this theme many times in the 1960s and 1970s, producing surveys which 'proved' that people would like to have the right to opt out of the NHS. However, although Arthur Seldon sat on the British Medical Association's committee of inquiry, which reported in 1970, he and his colleagues at the IEA remained political outsiders.

Their position changed dramatically in 1975, when Margaret Thatcher was elected leader of the Conservative Party. Right-wing 'research institutes' suddenly enjoyed an unprecedented vogue. Most importantly, the new Tory leadership listened to them respectfully. The Centre for Policy Studies (CPS), run by Alfred Sherman, became a Thatcherite alternative to the incorrigibly Heathite Conservative Party research department. Sherman, a *Daily Telegraph* leader-writer and an ex-Marxist, became a speech-writer and close adviser to Mrs Thatcher. The IEA also found favour with Thatcher: Ralph Harris, the IEA's co-director, was given a life peerage in 1979.

The CPS and the IEA, buoyed by their new-found influence, have preached their gospel vigorously. In 1979 the IEA published *Over-Ruled on Welfare*, a scathing criticism of the welfare state. In 1980, Arthur Seldon was the star contributor to a book called *National Health Issues: The British Experience*, sponsored by the drug company Hoffmann-La Roche. He argued that the essential failings of the NHS were 'its divorce of payment from service'; 'the intervention of the state as a third party between doctors and patients'; and 'the centralisation of initiatives'.

Later in 1980 the Centre for Policy Studies produced an equally weighty book, *The Litmus Papers: A National Health Disservice*, edited once again by Arthur Seldon.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

He was in combative mood: his concluding chapter was headed, simply, 'Why the NHS Must Fail'. Seldon elaborated:

> The NHS must fail to supply the British people with the best medical care they want because it prevents them as individual consumers from paying for the services that suit their personal family requirements, circumstances and preferences. This judgment is common sense.

Another contributor was Hugh Elwell, who worked for BUPA for 20 years and is now a consultant to Private Patients' Plan, the second largest provident association. Soon after writing his chapter he was asked by Patrick Jenkin, then the Social Services Secretary, to act as a 'specialist adviser' to a DHSS working party on alternative ways of funding the health service.

ALTHOUGH MOST PEOPLE on the New Right agree that the NHS is a failure ('a dying experiment', as one puts it), they are not unanimous in their proposals for change. Some argue that the financing should be altered – from tax to compulsory health insurance – but that the medical care itself should still, by and large, be provided by the NHS. Others, notably Alfred Sherman and Arthur Seldon, think that changing the method of payment alone is not enough: the NHS cannot be reformed, 'any more than any other nationalised industry can'. What is needed is denationalisation.

This would be fine for those who could afford the fees. But what about the rest of the population? The point was honestly dealt with by D. S. Lees in 1961:

> The . . . argument is that, without NHS, families with low incomes could not afford to pay, either directly or through insurance. This is true . . .

Lees tried to soften the blow by arguing that, without the NHS, general taxation would be substantially lower 'thereby increasing disposable income and reducing the number in need'. Nevertheless he conceded that immediately and for some time to come there would be people who were unable to meet medical costs:

> This is a serious problem and no one would wish to minimise its importance. But to abolish the market is to risk throwing out the baby with the bathwater.

When challenged on what exactly they would do about people unable to afford medical costs, the New Rightists mutter that there could be a government subsidy for those in need. They do not like having to admit this, since it conflicts with their general principle that subsidies spoil the operation of a free market. On the whole, however, they simply ignore this awkward point.

Most practising Tory politicians are rather more cautious. The 1979 manifesto was carefully non-committal:

> The Royal Commission on the Health Service is studying the financing of health care, and any examination of possible longer term changes – for example greater reliance on the insurance principle – must await their report.

When the Royal Commission did produce its report, later the same year, it came out firmly against insurance. But Patrick Jenkin still found the idea alluring, and he set up his working party of DHSS officials and 'specialist advisers'. The working party rejected the American system of funding health care – recognising that even with insurance a third of all personal bankruptcies in the USA are caused by individuals' inability to meet medical bills. However, the working party did express an interest in the methods of financing used in France, Germany and Holland. It proposed that the government should make a more detailed study of how a system of social insurance could be introduced in Britain.

By the time the report was completed, last November, Patrick Jenkin had been replaced by Norman Fowler. The report was not published, but its contents were leaked in December to the *Guardian*, which began its front-page story: 'The government is preparing to woo public opinion to agree to the abolition of the National Health Service as it stands today.' This caused outrage on the Labour benches and among Tory Wets. Norman Fowler let it be known that he would not act on the working party's report.

And there the sleeping dog lay, until it was awoken again last month by the leaking of the 'think tank' report. Once again the government found itself having to disown a report and reassure the public that 'the National Health Service is safe with us'.

SINCE A FULL-SCALE switch to health insurance would be financially and politically impossible the Tories have only two options left. The first is to 'privatise' the less sensitive parts of the NHS, such as cleaning, catering, security and so on; the second is to encourage the expansion of private health.

Madson Pirie, director of the Adam Smith Institute, has claimed that savings of up to 40 per cent can be made by putting NHS catering and laundries out to private tender. There have been three circulars from Whitehall encouraging privatisation of health services. So far most health authorities, which are anyway slow to react to central directives, have failed to respond. But the Tory purge of the boards of Regional Health Authorities may make them more responsive. Certainly the lobbyists for private contractors were swarming round Brighton last week.

However, the government's main efforts have gone into encouraging private health care. The hope is that in the areas where the private sector specialises – acute treatment, for instance – pressures on the NHS and the public purse would be reduced. The Health Minister, Gerard Vaughan, has said that he hopes the private sector will carry out a quarter of all hospital work by 1985.

The government has not relied here merely on verbal encouragement. The present dispute in the NHS is a great fillip to the private sector. As a recent study by Manchester Business School commented:

> It is the perceived standard of service that is relevant to the potential or subscribing private health customer, not the actual service of which she or he has had little experience. The media and the general public debate concerning the NHS play a considerable part in determining the demand for private health.

BUPA itself has always made a point of publicising the shortcomings of the NHS. Between 1975 and 1980 it commissioned no fewer than 14 public opinion polls; a typical finding was that 73 per cent of trade unionists were in favour of allowing private medical treatment.

The private sector has also had more practical assistance. The government adjusted NHS consultants' contracts so that they can do more private work. It has amended the Health Services Act to abolish the Health Services Board, which was set up to phase out pay beds in NHS hospitals. Private interests may now build, without authorisation, hospitals with up to 120 beds (previously the limit was 75). In the 1981 budget, employees earning less than £8,500 who were enrolled in group voluntary medical insurance schemes ceased to pay income tax on the value of their employer's contribution. This tax relief could well be extended in the next budget.

Britain's three private medical Provident Associations do not disguise their desire for help from Sir Geoffrey Howe. During 1980 they enjoyed a 27 per cent rise in the number of subscribers – more than twice the 1979 growth rate. As well as the 150 private hospitals already in existence, 20 are under construction and 20 more are planned. However, the associations now fear that demand may be drying up. It has fallen badly in the last two years. Employers have become more aware of the cost to themselves of agreeing to group insurance schemes.

The private sector now says that it needs more positive fiscal help from the Tories if it is to grow. Most private insurance deals with routine treatments – hernias, for example, or Mrs Thatcher's varicose veins. It concentrates on these cases because they are the easiest to deal with profitably. But if it is to reach the size desired by ministers, the government will now have to introduce further tax concessions to stimulate potential customers. This will, in effect, be a direct fiscal subsidy for private medicine, representing revenue that could have been spent on the NHS. It will thus go against the government's stated policy, which is to see a transfer of resources to the 'Cinderella" services – dealing with the elderly, the mentally ill and the chronically sick.

Private insurers regard such people as bad risks, who would raise the level of premiums to a prohibitive level. As one economist puts it:

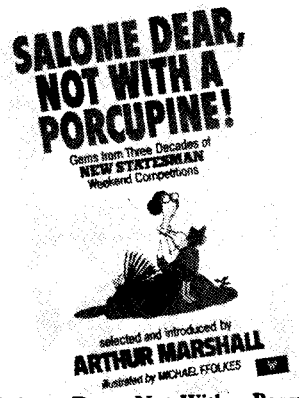
> Any government which foregoes tax revenue to encourage private, non-urgent repair surgery is inviting ridicule and cynicism- . . . With tax subsidy, those who use the private sector are not reducing the waiting list for those who depend on the NHS; they are benefiting at the expense of the chronically sick and the mentally ill and handicapped.

Geoffrey Howe is now considering just such a subsidy. It would be in keeping with the Tories' belief in looking after their own; for the same Geoffrey Howe, in the late 1960s, sat on the Council of Management of Private Patients' Plan. □

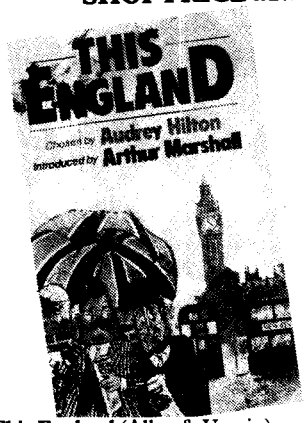
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Save up to £10 with this Christmas offer!

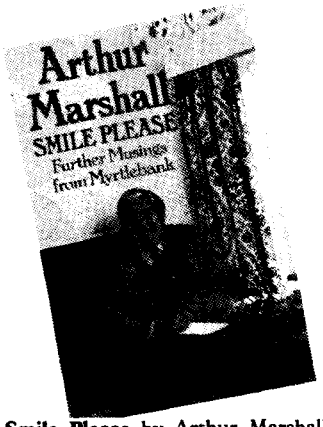
FREE — one of these new books when you start *subscribing


SALOME DEAR, NOT WITH A PORCUPINE!
Gems from Three Decades of NEW STATESMAN Weekend Competitions
selected and introduced by
ARTHUR MARSHALL
illustrated by MICHAEL FFOLKES

Salome Dear, Not With a Porcupine (Unwin) . . . wickedly clever . . . deliciously funny gems from two earlier books of entries to the NS Weekly Competition
Paperback, 5x7¾in., 144 pages
SHOP PRICE £1.95



This England (Allen & Unwin) . . . selection of the inane, insane and characteristically British items which you cull from the Press
Hardback, 5½x9in., 184 pages
SHOP PRICE £5.95



Smile Please by Arthur Marshall (Hamish Hamilton) . . . 48 of Arthur's weekly musings in the NS . . . cheeky, dotty, perceptive
Hardback, 5½x9in., 198 pages
SHOP PRICE £6.95

Start an NS *subscription before Christmas – and you will have one of these new books, priced up to £6.95, entirely FREE!

You can choose which book to have – a gift at the special subscription rates shown in the order form below.

What's more – you will save £££s on the cost of buying the **New Statesman** any other way. For example: our top offer – *24 weeks of the* **New Statesman** *plus the £6.95 book "Smile Please" for only £11* – would cost £21.35 in the shops . . . so you save £10.35!

We are offering two kinds of subscription . . . "Personal" and "Christmas Gift".

PERSONAL SUBSCRIPTIONS – The **New Statesman** will be posted every week to your address (UK & Eire addresses only, please) starting as soon as we receive your order.

CHRISTMAS GIFT SUBSCRIPTIONS – A subscription to the **New Statesman** makes a unique and satisfying gift to a friend. We will post the **New Statesman** to your friend's address (in UK & Eire only, please), starting from our Christmas Double Number – with which we will send a **New Statesman** greetings card in your name.

Unless you tell us otherwise, we will send the free book to you.

Frustration by Claire Bretecher (Methuen) . . . collection of cartoons like the ones which delight/enrage/mystify NS readers each week
Limpback, 8½x12in., 70 pages
SHOP PRICE £3.95

***Subscriptions and books must be for UK & Eire addresses only — sorry, no overseas orders due to postal costs**

FREE BOOK SUBSCRIPTION ORDER

Your name (BLOCK LETTERS PLEASE) .....

Your address .....

Please tick the offer you want:

13-week NS subscription	+ SALOME DEAR £6.00	☐
16-week NS subscription	+ BRETECHER £7.50	☐
20-week NS subscription	+ THIS ENGLAND £9.50	☐
24-week NS subscription	+ SMILE PLEASE £11.00	☐

Please enclose your cheque/postal order (payable to "New Statesman") for £ . . . . . .
Please tick the subscription you want:

PERSONAL, sent to you starting now ☐

CHRISTMAS GIFT, starting from our Christmas Double Number ☐ sent to:

Your friend's name (BLOCK LETTERS please) .....

Your friend's address.....

Please send this order form, with your payment, to: UK & Eire addresses only
New Statesman, Free Book Subscription Offer, Freepost (no stamp required), LONDON WC1V 7XD.

THIS OFFER MUST CLOSE ON 13 DECEMBER because our subscription rates must go up then. So why not order now?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IRELAND

Jim Prior goes to the polls

Mary Holland previews next Thursday's vote for the Northern Irish Assembly, which is being sold as 'Ulster's last chance'

'THE MOST VISIBLE candidate in this election is Jim Prior', commented one Northern Irish politician sourly last week. He had been watching yet another TV interview in which the Northern Ireland Secretary attempted, first, to persuade the province's voters that they should go to the polls next Thursday and, second, that their politicans should be prepared to give his new Assembly a chance.

If the success of this first political initiative in Northern Ireland for six years could be assured by the energy of James Prior, the chances for the Assembly would be a great deal brighter than most people, including the Northern Ireland Office, predict. For the past fortnight Mr Prior has been writing articles in newspapers on both sides of the Irish Sea and giving interviews to anyone who will listen, emphasising that this is almost certainly the last chance that any British government is going to give Ulster's politicians to run their own affairs.

Objectively, there seems very little hope that his appeals will be heeded by local politicians. The main Catholic parties – the SDLP, led by John Hume, and Provisional Sinn Fein – have both said that they will boycott the Assembly. The Unionist parties are prepared to attend, but have been explicit during the election campaign that they regard the Assembly as the channel through which they can present their demand for the return of majority (i.e. Protestant) rule to the province.

Much of Mr Prior's programme of frenetic media activity has been devoted to spelling out that there is no chance of this happening; and that if any powers are to be devolved again to local Ulster politicians, there must be reserved seats in government for Catholics representing the Nationalist/Republican tradition. Whatever the response at the polls, however, it is now obvious that a return of devolved government, 'rolling' or otherwise, is no longer regarded as a serious possibility by the Government – at least in the foreseeable future.

Instead, Mr Prior is keen to make his Assembly function in a more modest way, but one that could develop constructively given the present polarised politics of Northern Ireland. The NIO has always laid great emphasis on the committees that the Assembly is empowered to set up, to advise the Secretary of State and his team of ministers on legislation affecting the province. Much of this, which at present is enacted by Order in Council, or goes through Parliament on the nod, is of great importance in a province whose economic state is desperate. If Northern Ireland's politicians could sit down together to discuss such relatively uncontentious areas as Health, Social Welfare and Housing – as they already do in the EEC – it just might help create a more constructive political climate.

The main obstacle to this is the determination of the Catholic parties, in particular the SDLP, to boycott the Assembly. To try to get round this, the Northern Ireland Office is looking at ways of enabling members to take part in committees, perhaps even to chair them, without attending the full Assembly in plenary session. They could then claim to be looking after their constituents' welfare in the committees, while boycotting the Assembly, which has the task of discussing the future political direction of the province. But no-one is very hopeful. One NIO source told me that, if a breakthrough did come, it would not be until Westminster had categorically rejected any Unionist demand for a return to majority rule. This might have the effect of placating Catholics, but might provoke a Protestant walkout from the Assembly.

IN ONE important respect, Mr Prior has been helped by recent political events in the Irish Republic, in particular Mr Charles Haughey's current difficulties. This is because the SDLP's strategy is intimately connected with Mr Haughey's survivial. The main plank of the party's election campaign has been to try to persuade Catholic voters in Northern Ireland that, once the election is over, the Dublin government will move to break the impasse. Specifically the SDLP has said it will be asking Mr Haughey to set up a 'Council for a New Ireland' in which members representing the 'Nationalist' minority in the North would meet members of the Dublin parliament. The task of this council would be to draw up a blueprint for Irish reunification for presentation to the British government as a basis for new negotiations when the Assembly breaks down.

Only a fortnight ago, when it was first announced, this proposal added considerable weight to the SDLP's election manifesto. It enabled Mr Hume to extend some hope for the future of his party, in that it would give members elected to the Assembly something to do, and presented an open challenge to the British government's oft-repeated dictum that the affairs of Northern Ireland were nothing to do with the Republic. Most important of all it seemed like the kind of grand gesture which would appeal to Mr Haughey who, it was generally assumed, had already given his backing to the idea.

Since then, however, the Irish premier's own position has suffered a dramatic reverse. He has survived a vote of 'No Confidence' issued from within his own Fianna Fail party, but his standing is far from secure. He is unlikely to have much stomach in the foreseeable future for an All Ireland Nationalist Council, which, he knows, most other politicians in the Republic would regard as absurdly grandoise and potentially dangerous. They are much more concerned with trying to improve relations with Britain than with drawing up provocative schemes. Those of them who watched proceedings at last week's Conservative Party Conference were genuinely shocked at the anti-Irish feeling manifested in the hall during Whitelaw's speech on the Irish vote in Britain.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mr Prior is also keen to improve the strained state of Anglo-Irish relations, particularly because these affect the attitudes of the Catholic minority in the North. As soon as the Assembly elections are out of the way, he will set about trying to re-establish a good working relationship with Dublin, and even to persuade Mrs Thatcher of its value .

He knows that, if he could get the parliamentary tier of the Anglo-Irish Council off the ground, that would do more than anything else to persuade the more moderate members of the SDLP to play a part in the Assembly. He will be hoping to convince Mr Haughey and Mr Hume that such a grouping, with representatives of the Westminster Parliament, the Dail and the Northern Irish Assembly, would provide a better forum for discussing the future direction of Anglo-Irish relations than an exclusively Irish Council. □

SOCCER

The other hooligans

Trevor Fisher argues that British football clubs are being damaged by businessmen who have turned them into personal fiefdoms

ON 28 SEPTEMBER it was announced that the West Midlands Chief Constable had authorised a full inquiry into 'possible criminal activities' at Aston Villa. The move followed study by the commercial branch of the West Midlands Police of a private study of recent events at Villa Park, the first division team's headquarters.

Although football is losing supporters faster than the Liberal/SDP Alliance, very little attention has been paid to the problems that boardroom politics themselves are creating for the game. Events in the West Midlands suggest that the activities and ambition of the often small-time entrepreneurs who occupy the directors boxes may be a key undermining factor.

Wolverhampton Wanderers first tested the loyalty of their supporters by being relegated, going bankrupt, and suffering three boardroom upheavals in as many months, while Villa followed a season in which they won the Championship by parting with their manager, winning the European Cup, and being visited by the West Midlands Police.

Wolves have been a troubled club for years. Relations between the then manager, John Barnwell, and his chairman, millionaire Harry Marshall, became strained. As the club sank towards the second division, reportedly losing £20,000 per week, Marshall reacted in the traditional way and sacked the manager, hiring Ian Greaves from Oxford United instead. But Greaves was unable to save Wolves from relegation and more financial troubles.

Relegation caused a boardroom upheaval. Discontented shareholders forced Marshall to face a vote of confidence, which he narrowly won – with the help of the shareholding of a supporter who was later found to have died some time before the meeting. Marshall failed to survive this revelation, despite claiming that he was negotiating with Walsall chairman, Ken Wheldon, for a deal which would save the club. The suggestion was that Wheldon was planning to buy office space at Wolves and switch Walsall's games to Wolverhampton, selling Walsall's ground to property developers. This suggestion caused consternation at Walsall, but Marshall did not last long enough for the threat to materialise.

Marshall's replacement as chairman was Birmingham businessman Doug Ellis, formerly director of both Aston Villa and Birmingham City. Ellis was brought in by wealthy steel stockholder and former Wolves player Malcolm Finlayson, who became vice-chairman on 22 June. Finlayson planned to buy office space at the Wolves ground for £450,000 to reduce the club's reported debts of £2½ million. Survival depended on Ellis managing to arrange a substantial sponsorship deal for Aston Villa. But on 30 June it was reported that Ellis had failed. On 2 July Lloyds Bank called in its approximately £1.8 million of loans to the club. At that point Ellis called in the receiver.

The month of July saw rival attempts to save the club come and go. Wheldon of Walsall made a £1.5 million bid. Two other bids were rumoured and then, minutes from the deadline set by the Football League on 31 July, the flamboyant former Wolves star, Derek Dougan, bought the club from the receiver with the aid of a Manchester-based property group. Dougan sacked Ian Greaves, appointed a new manager, and the 'new' Wolverhampton Wanderers began the season with 'born again' enthusiasm.

ASTON VILLA has now made a bold attempt to capture the Midlands football headlines. Villa, the area's most successful club, went through a similar financial crisis in 1968, after years of decline leading to insolvency. The club was also re-floated under the guidance of the ubiquitous football director, Doug Ellis. Ellis's style, however, led to considerable board room friction; and in 1972 Ellis and his supporters ousted the then chairman, Jim Greenhalgh. This did not secure lasting peace, for in the autumn of 1979 Ellis tried to unseat the next chairman, Ron Bendall. Ellis called an Extraordinary General Meeting, but was beaten by the big guns of the large bloc shareholdings which dominate Aston Villa's 8,000 shareholders.

So, for the last three years, Villa has been run by septuaganarian Bendall, his son Don, and two relatively unknown directors. Bendall senior lives in the Isle of Man, making periodic trips to Villa Park, where he and his son, commanding 52 per cent of the votes, have absolute power.

Their regime has caused comment. After winning the Championship in 1981, the Bendalls surprisingly fell out with Ron Saunders, Villa's most successful post-war manager. Saunders resigned at Christmas, after bitter struggles with his employers. Even so Villa won the European Cup, but unease about the club's management grew. A private report was prepared into contracts for work on the new North stand, where there were allegedly no orders or invoices for work to the value of £400,000. This report brought in the West Midlands Police. The company involved, Sports Ground Consultants, went into liquidation this week.

The fanaticism of Villa supporters has in the past been legendary. But now there is a growing cynicism among the dwindling band. Both Aston Villa and Wolverhampton Wanderers illustrate the damage that is done to football when clubs become the personal fiefs of local businessmen. Over the last two decades, control of football has moved increasingly into the hands of self-made businessmen acting out their personal and financial psycho-dramas. It is no way to run an important part of the commercial leisure industry. □

The Granada Guildhall Lectures 1982

THE LIBERTY OF THE CITIZEN

The freedoms which lie at the heart of our society are coming under pressure from a number of directions. Measures designed to reinforce the rights of the citizen sometimes have the reverse effect.
In this series of lectures, three speakers examine and assess the underlying issues from the standpoint of expert knowledge in the fields of ethnic freedoms, the law and new development in communications.

CITY OF LONDON GUILDHALL 8.30pm

1. Monday 1 November – 'Reflections on a multi-racial democracy'
   Mr Franklin Thomas, *President of The Ford Foundation*
2. Monday 8 November – 'The Fear of Freedom'
   Mr John Mortimer, Q.C., *Barrister and Author*
3. Monday 29 November – 'Cable and the individual: menace or opportunity?'
   Lord Hunt, *Chairman of the Government inquiry into cable and satellite broadcasting*

A limited number of free tickets are available for all three lectures on application now to :
Granada Guildhall Lectures
36 Golden Square, London W1R 4AH
Please indicate clearly which lectures you wish to attend

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

POLICE

Informers and new technology

Duncan Campbell previews a new book which looks at the changing ways of police information gathering

POLICE RECORDS in a typical urban area now cover one in six males in the population. Modern police technology and the increasing emphasis on 'fire-brigade' response to incidents also mean that the trend is towards a more depersonalised and insensitive kind of policing. These conclusions emerge from a new report* on 'Police powers and politics' by two law lecturers, Robert Baldwin and Richard Kinsey. For their research, they accompanied members of one of Britain's large city forces as they went about their work.

It is apparent from scattered clues in their book that the police force involved is the Lothians and Borders Police, responsible for the Edinburgh area. It uses a scheme of Area Constables whose tasks go rather wider than the sort of activities normally associated with 'community policing'. The job specification for Area Constables stresses the intelligence – and information – gathering aspects, and asks that he/she should:

> Secure the services of at least one observer in every street, not a paid professional informant, but someone who knows the inhabitants and is inquisitive enough to find out what is going on and is willing to pass on such information gained.

Various sources of information can include shopkeepers or even schoolchildren who are invited to pass on information about their families; one Area Constable told the authors that:

> we go down to the schools a lot. You get a hell of a lot of information from kids.
>
> But they get wise to us about seven or eight (years old) . . .

Even so:

> they still like to boast about what their big brothers or their dads have been up to . . .

The tasks involved in this variant of 'community policing', have themselves become a measure of efficiency. The job specification notes:

> (The Constable's) effectiveness to some degree will be judged by the amount of information he/she feeds to the records of local crime intelligence.

THE RECORDS which have been set up in the Edinburgh area are already extensive. A new computer is soon to enter service. The force has a central intelligence office, each division has its own Divisional Intelligence Officer and subordinate stations feed information via full-time 'collators'. On the streets are full-time 'Crime Patrols' – plainclothes officers working primarily to gather intelligence – who 'con' or 'glean' information, while looking for criminals and their associates.

The centralised files in Edinburgh already now cover 10 per cent of the area's population. 'Well in excess of 50 per cent of these persons do not have any criminal record'. More files still are held separately by Divisional Intelligence Officers and collators. Most of the information stored, the authors report, relates to orthodox crimes, criminals – real or suspected – and their associates. 'Political' information is mainly reserved for Special Branch files.

But there were some examples of local intelligence which went beyond crime. In one station, an 'indecencies' index was kept, including the personal details of homosexuals on the grounds that they were a 'danger to themselves'. There is no outside scrutiny or serious internal review of such local databanks, drawn up by those serving as Intelligence Officers or local station 'collators'.

The authors estimated that one in six males in the area – and probably one in three of young working-class men – was 'the subject of covert criminal intelligence reports'.

This comprehensive intelligence system was not planned, but just grew over the last 20 years.

Each of the four divisions in the city has its own eight-strong Crime Patrol. The job is much sought after, as being closer to the average police officer's idea of 'real' police work that most 'uniformed' jobs. But, say Baldwin and Kinsey:

> Viewed dispassionately it is sordid and invidious, calling for a talent to 'con' people, to mislead and betray confidences and generally to use and manipulate others.

On the streets, police powers to stop and search have been adapted effectively into identification checks. When dealing with unwilling informants, the authors observed police officers would often make threats they could not legally carry out, such as a night's detention in police cells.

A new computer, partly holding criminal intelligence records, began operating with the Lothian and Borders police this year. The £1.4 million installation will be the most powerful crime and information computer yet available to any local force in Britain. However, the Lothians and Borders force has promised its police committee that it will only hold intelligence files on convicted persons on the computer. On this basis only some 18,000 of the present 80,000 manual files will go onto the new computer. But the unrestricted manual files will still remain.

The increasing emphasis on building central intelligence files fits in with new police powers, which rely more and more on detention and interrogation. Police in Scotland were given extensive new powers, such as detention, under the 1980 Scottish Criminal Justice Act. The Home Office hopes shortly to extend these powers to England and Wales.

'New technology' has also helped to produce a new pattern of 'fire brigade' policing. This is not the fault of the police, say the authors. Public images and expectations of the police have been much shaped by the regular and stylised presentation of US police tactics in numerous TV serials. As technology has become available, first in the form of radio links, and latterly as 'command and control' computers, the public have come to expect a fast police service on demand. This has encouraged heavy police emphasis on glamorous CID work and fast car patrols – and less on basic links with the community.

Ironically, the police themselves are often the first to notice the dehumanising effect. One of the senior officers interviewed by Baldwin and Kinsey said, referring specifically to the way in which a 'command and control' computer had changed his work:

> In some of the smaller areas, there is some resentment in having to be controlled by big stations elsewhere controlling big areas . . . I've got to report the incident first of all to the central controller . . . who has all the command and control information . . . There's a 'big brother' type of feeling creeping into a lot of local stations . . .

One is tempted to observe: 'quite so'. □

* *Police powers and politics* by Robert Baldwin and Richard Kinsey, to be published by Quartet Books (£9.95 hardback).

THIS ENGLAND

£3 book tokens for entries printed (on postcards, please).

☐ 'We were simply objecting to a political decision being taken for political reasons,' he said – *Wakefield Express* (R. Mitchell)

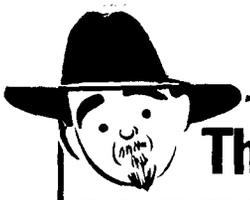
☐ The first objective, non-partisan assessment of the performance and prospects of the SDP and its relationship with the Liberal Party – right up to the election of Roy Jenkins as party leader in July 1982. By the editor of the *New Statesman*. – Advert in *New Statesman* (Malcolm Norman)

☐ The United Counties Bus Co at Northampton is offering cheap fares to passengers with brightly coloured hair or wearing strange clothes, under a 'daft discount' scheme to woo back lost passengers. – Daily Telegraph (James Scott)

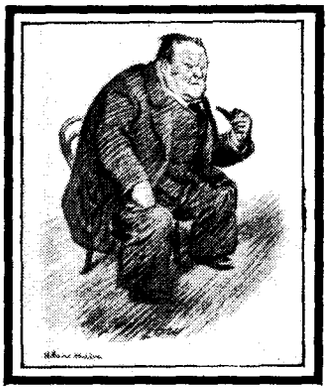
☐ Excessive flushing of lavatories could be one reason for a surprise water bill of £750,000 for Gwent County Council, says a report. Now the use of lavatories is to be monitored by a computer. – *Daily Telegraph* (W. Pugh)

☐ Miss Eve Faulkner (Western Area Woman's Association) said that she regretted the church's role in the disarmament debate. 'One wishes the church would keep its mind on higher things,' she said. – *Guardian* (Edwin Pearce)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



The 2nd NEW STATESMAN Low Collection



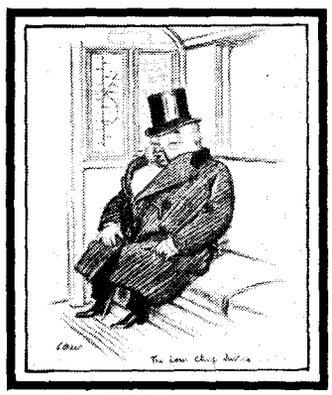
Hilaire Belloc 1926

Arnold Bennett 1926

Joseph Conrad 1926

H. G. Wells 1926

Lloyd George 1926



Lord Chief Justice 1926

Marie Stopes 1933

J. H. Thomas 1926

MORE HISTORIC PRINTS

from only £3 each

Fifty-six years ago, the NEW STATESMAN commissioned the young David Low to sketch the famous of the day. We reproduced his sketches in 1926 and published a second series in 1933. They helped to establish Low as the 20th century's greatest political cartoonist.

Extra copies of his sketches were printed, stored and forgotten – until they were found in our vaults last year.

Last autumn we offered a selection for sale. Now we offer a new selection (illustrated above) with a few (see order form) from last year.

These reproductions are a little blemished by age but are in acceptable condition. As we said at the time: each is 'printed on special cartridge paper by the finest offset process available'. They cannot be repeated in this form: Low's original drawings and the printing plates were destroyed before the war.

The reproductions are available in two ways:

● MOUNTED and FRAMED at £15 each (**to UK and Eire addresses only** – sorry, no overseas orders due to packing problems) including postage and VAT. The mount is dark brown, the frame is plain mid-oak hardwood, about 11in. wide by 13¼in. deep.

● UNFRAMED at £3 each (**to UK and Eire addresses** – overseas prices on application) including postage and VAT.

The framed prints will make original and pleasing Christmas gifts. To be sure of receiving them in time for Christmas, please order before **Wed. 24 November.**

ILLUSTRATED ABOVE	FRAMED @ £15 each	UNFRAMED @ £3 each
Hilaire Belloc		
Arnold Bennett		
Joseph Conrad		
H. G. Wells		
Lloyd George		
Lord Chief Justice		
Marie Stopes		
J. H. Thomas		
NOT ILLUSTRATED		
Lord Beaverbrook		
J. M. Keynes		

Number framed..... Remittance £ .....

Number unframed ..... Remittance £ .....

TOTAL £.....

If any of the prints you want have sold out, may we substitute:

Winston Churchill Yes ☐ No ☐

Ramsay Macdonald Yes ☐ No ☐

If 'No', we will refund your money. Prices are for UK and Eire addresses only. For overseas addresses, please apply for prices of unframed prints (sorry, framed prints not available). Please allow up to 28 days for delivery.

Send this coupon to: **LOW PRINT SALES, NEW STATESMAN, FREEPOST** (no stamp required), **LONDON WC1V 7XD.** Cheques/postal orders payable to 'New Statesman'.

PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS

Name .....

Address .....

..... Post Code .....

Your signature.....

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DIARY

Christopher Price

With patriotism back in the centre stage of politics, this week's VCs and victory parades have been an impressive piece of news management – calculated to extend the Conservative conference a little and upstage the Social Democrats. There is little doubt that the Tory thrust at the next election will be at Labour's patriotic jugular – we'll be accused of wanting to govern a country we're not prepared to defend. We should counter-attack by branding them as the real traitors – selling our common heritage into private, alien hands. There are some excellent anti-privatisation tracts in English literature – the best of the lot scripted by William Shakespeare for John of Gaunt, about a 'precious stone, set in a silver sea' leased out by a corrupt and incompetent government. This one has gone one better – they have sold both the land and the sea. They will deserve and get constant reminders of the 'inky blots and rotten parchment bonds' of Britoil shares and NHS insurance premiums.

○

Even in military terms, I've never seen why the Tories should have all the best patriotic tunes. Instead of privatising the army, they've made it their own, nationalised constituency. It was the generals' determination to opt for a mercenary rather than a conscript army in the 1950s which sadly distanced Labour from the armed forces. Conscription brings left-wing parties – in Sweden, France and Greece – far closer to the nuts and bolts of defence policy. Now that we've gone firmly non-nuclear, at the very least we must have a front bench spokesman (John Silkin is currently caretaking) to spell out our commitment to as efficient a conventional force as we can actually afford.

○

If Michael Fagan had climbed into Buckingham Palace as part of an SAS initiative exercise, he'd have earned a medal and a place in the Falklands parade. As it is, he is being sent to Park Lane, one of Britain's four top security hospitals, where he could be for years. All to stop him selling his story to the *Sun* and causing further embarrassment to the Queen; and we accuse the Russians of using mental hospitals for political purposes! It is extraordinary how any deviance from the accepted norm freaks out our supposedly sane Establishment. In deepest Berks, at Wexham Park Hospital, Slough, the authorities have just sacked a clutch of nurses for refusing forcibly to medicate a female patient who inadvisedly told her doctor she did not wish to return to her husband. (A tribunal shortly afterwards let her out and declared her sane.) It's significant that the first day back in the Commons on Monday will be devoted to Fagan, Wexham Park and the rights of the mentally ill. More importantly, the following week, 25/6 October, MIND's Annual Conference in London will discuss how far volunteers can modify the statutory system which sacks nurses and locks up Michael Fagan. They welcome anyone interested. 01-637 0741 for details.

○

Incarceration is an English speciality and even the Labour Party, as Peter Kellner pointed out last week, has not got very radical policies on emptying our prisons. Most prisoners are in for far too long and what's worse, a few are completely innocent. I visited one such prisoner, David Freeman, in Long Lartin, the other day. Sentenced to life for indecency, he's been trying to prove his innocence for 13 years. It would be far simpler for society to let him out, but the Home Office keep him resolutely locked up as a Category A prisoner. One glimmer of hope I find in the system is that sometimes creativity comes out of it. Over 20 years ago, Arthur Koestler founded an annual art and craft competition for prisoners, to assuage the memories of his own time in a fascist death cell in Spain. The current winners are on show at BP's offices in Victoria Street; quite as remarkable is the work of the Holloway women prisoners at the People's Gallery (73 Prince of Wales Road, NW5). It's sad that they'll come out to a cultural wilderness, choking to death on the cuts.

ROGER WODDIS

Sick parade

'I hope Maggie will have had enough of her war soon and then we can all go home and become schoolteachers, vicars and ban-the-bomb enthusiasts.' – Lieutenant David Tinker, RN, killed in HMS Glamorgan in the Falklands.

They marched to the drums in the morning,
The City rejoiced in the rain,
With only the triumph remembered,
And none of the price and the pain.
And daily despair was forgotten,
Dismissed with the wave of a flag,
While cameras zoomed in on the Lady
And smirking officials in drag.

They found little news in the section
Where some of the casualties sat,
For what is the shot of a cripple,
Compared to a picador hat?
The lost were so hungry for splendour,
The lonely so eager to cheer,
They turned a blind eye on the others,
The fallen who brought up the rear.

The voices of honey took over
And talked of a 'splendid array';
They sang of the rule of Britannia,
And called it a glorious day.
But none of the songs that were chorused,
Nor any brave words that were said,
Could banish the ghost from the banquet
Or silence the voice of the dead.

Colin Wheeler

○

Culture will at least receive a headline boost next week when the Select Committee which I chair issues a report on the Arts in Britain. Some of our predecessors were less reputable. In 1816, the Select Committee on the Earl of Elgin's Collection of Sculptured Marbles recommended that the taxpayer recompense his Lordship with £35,000 for the treasures he'd stolen from the Parthenon. Now Melina Mercouri, the Greek culture minister, wants them back and she had some impressive international support in Mexico this summer, when UNESCO debated the issue. The Thatcher government says: 'No'. It's terrified of opening the floodgates, and sees the British Museum, feeble Ionic imitation though it be, as a sort of parallel national heirloom, to be kept as inviolate as the Parthenon, though I doubt if the British would ever go to the lengths of the Greeks, who sent the Turks free supplies of shot in the 1826 siege of Athens, to stop them pulling the lead out of the Parthenon's pillars. Although Melina's in for a long struggle, I happen to be on her side, and suspect she may win in the end.

○

But it will have to be post-Thatcher. This is the meanest, most philistine, introspective government I can remember. At one of those grand lunches, this week, at which I increasingly seem to find myself and at which we were meant to be discussing great issues of cultural policy, a couple of Permanent Secretaries actually had a public moan at each other about which of the two was to find the minuscule amount of money needed to give overseas students a slightly better deal. I felt angry and mused about John of Gaunt again (whom I played, 35 years ago, in the Leeds Grammar School Annual Shakespeare Performance):

> This England that was wont to conquer others
> Hath made a shameful conquest of herself.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Taking liberties

Sue Woodman and Pat Reaney on the sinister consequences of the arrest of former urban guerrillas

New York

ON 2 OCTOBER 1981, two policemen and a Brinks security guard were shot dead in an armoured car raid in Nyack, a sleepy little town 25 miles north of New York City. It was the kind of crime which takes place in the USA every day. But when the suspects were rounded up, the authorities claimed they had stumbled onto something enormous – the resurgence of domestic terrorism.

Among their seven detainees were three former Black Panthers and three prominent members of the Weather Underground, the radical leftist group which officials believed had long since disbanded. Allegedly involved in numerous political crimes, David Gilbert, Judith Clark and Kathy Boudin of the Weather Underground had lived mainly underground since their movement's heyday in the early 1970s. Boudin and Gilbert have been sought by the police for over 10 years. The association of these people, claim the authorities, indicates that there is in the United States a far-reaching terrorist conspiracy between radical leftist underground groups and the Black Liberation Army.

The Weather Underground had its roots in the Students for a Democratic Society, an organisation of the late 1960s. Operating from university campuses, their political objectives were fuelled by the growing anti-Vietnam war movement, the violence surrounding the US civil rights crusade, and the widespread domestic poverty. Kathy Boudin and David Gilbert were among the SDS members who, in June 1969, formed the revolutionary Weathermen. Their name derives from the lyrics of a Bob Dylan song: 'You don't need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows.'

In October 1969, in addition to its bombing campaigns, the group played a central part in the notorious Day of Rage anti-war protests in Chicago. Afterwards, the bombings intensified. Many of the original members fell away, leaving a core of some 50 committed militants. In New York, they made their base at the elegant Greenwich Village home of John Wilkerson, father of one of its members, Cathy Wilkerson. On 6 March, 1970, while Mr Wilkerson was away, a bomb ripped the house apart. Three members of the Weathermen were killed by the bomb, which they were making. Cathy Wilkerson and Kathy Boudin escaped. Together with the remaining members, they were forced to live underground using a variety of aliases and forged identity papers.

In their early years on the run, the now renamed Weather Underground continued its violent activities, although in recent years the public has heard little or nothing from them. Then, in 1980, Catherine Wilkerson and Bernadine Dohrn, another prominent member, gave themselves up to the police. Both are now in prison.

FOR AMERICANS, the Brinks case raises a number of important constitutional concerns. Civil liberties groups fear

- that the US Government will exploit the case to 'prove' that a black/white terrorist organisation is operating in America
- that the hysteria created by the incident will enable the government to infringe basic civil rights in the name of national security
- that conspiracy laws are being invoked to try to establish 'guilt by association' of people not directly connected with the crime
- that several of the Nyack defendants are being tortured in prison while awaiting trial.

Most, if not all of these issues, will play an important part in the trial.

'Because the suspects and their organisations have expressed sympathy for, and in some cases received support from, foreign powers known to support international terrorism . . . a revival of terrorism in the United States by the network responsible for [this] action is not unlikely in the near future,' wrote Dr Samuel Francis in a recent issue of *International Security Review*, a publication of the American Security Council Foundation. Dr Francis is an aide to Senator John East, one of five senators on the recently-formed Senate sub-committee on Security and Terrorism.

Joel Lisker, chief counsel and staff director with the committee, added that shortly after the crime, the FBI had given them a special briefing on the 'possibility of foreign connections'. 'It seems pretty clear that this was not an isolated act of robbery for personal enrichment,' he said. 'This was intended to supply funds for an underground network dedicated to "carrying on the struggle".'

William Kunstler, a celebrated New York civil liberties lawyer and one of the defence attorneys in the case, denies the Senate committee's claims:

> The Brinks robbery triggered off a massive government response. They saw a magnificent opportunity to try to create the illusion of a massive black/white terrorist organisation in the US. The government was waiting for something to prove its pet international theory – that there is a Moscow-directed terrorist ring . . . and in order to combat it, you need a diminution of civil liberties here and an increase in the law and order concept of the Federal Government.

UPI

Clark (top) and Boudin: part of a 'network'?

Shortly after the Brinks hold-up, President Reagan signed an executive order – requiring no approval by Congress – to allow the Central Intelligence Agency to increase domestic surveillance, reversing the post-Watergate controls over CIA activity. Changes in the FBI's methods of operation also look certain to follow. According to Lisker:

> This robbery has changed the course of the Senate committee, and we shall be pressing soon for changes in the guidelines which have restricted FBI surveillance of domestic groups. The guidelines are an over-compensation for Watergate and have undoubtedly contributed to a diminution of the powers of the FBI. The Brinks case has made us aware that it is time for the pendulum to swing back.

Defence attorneys fear that the pendulum will swing too far, and that the government will enforce regulations which could impinge on personal liberties. They allege, for example, that the government is advancing its 'international terrorism theory' by using a little-known conspiracy law to link the Weather Underground defendants with a number of left-wing and black organisations.

SIX DAYS after the hold-ups, police converged on a Mississippi farmhouse and, with 200 armed men, tanks and helicopters, arrested Cynthia Boston, a leader of the Republic of New Afrika, a black nationalist group whose aim is to form an independent black nation in five southern US states. Boston was arrested, and held for ten days, under a statute known as RICO (the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organisations law), passed to deal with the Mafia and other organised crime. Under its provisions, people who are even loosely associated with a suspect organisation can be arrested as co-conspirators. ▶

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

'We are very concerned that this will lead to a situation where people who have committed no crime will be suspects because of their ideas and affiliations. Indeed, this is precisely what happened to Cynthia Boston,' claims Loren Siegel of the American Civil Liberties Union. 'It was a question of guilt by association.'

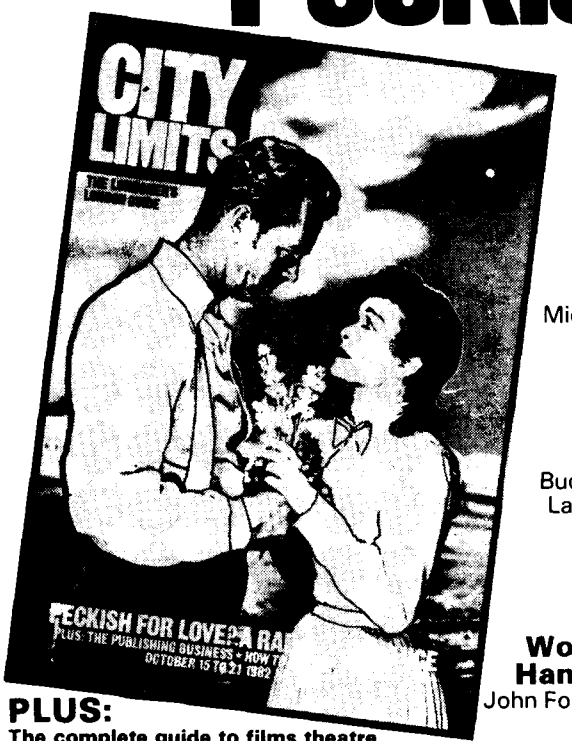
The conspiracy statute is also being used by a Federal Grand Jury. This group of citizens, chosen to serve for 18 months, determines whether there is sufficient evidence to issue indictments for crimes. It has full powers of subpoena. Seven people subpoenaed in connection with the Brinks case refused to appear and have been imprisoned. Unlike the massive press coverage given to the defendants, these incarcerations have received no attention at all.

The final concern is that defendants are being mistreated, both physically and mentally. From the time of her arrest, Kathy Boudin had been held virtually in solitary confinement and was denied the right to see her baby son. However, in January, a state judge ruled that the restrictions on Boudin were too severe, and ordered her to be returned among other prisoners and allowed to see selected visitors. Allegations of physical abuse have been made by four other defendants. One of them, Solomon Brown, claims that he was tortured to get him to inform on his co-defendants.

It is, of course, precisely because the defendants in the Brinks case are so well known in the US that the robbery was treated so differently in the Press from other equally brutal crimes. In the days that followed the robbery, virtually every newspaper, radio and TV station in New York headlined the story, with police reports of evidence that here was proof of reawakened domestic terrorism. Later, journalists admitted that many of their facts were not thoroughly checked; and that police or government sources were virtually all they had to go on. *Washington Post* reporter Kathy Sawyer said: 'In our first articles, we tended to blow the political thing out of proportion.'

After almost a year of arrests, investigations and allegations from both sides, the Brinks trial is now under way. It is expected to be one of the longest and costliest trials in US history. The Brinks defendants will be on trial for much more than a straightforward 'bungled robbery of a bank', as Kunstler maintains. And despite the avowed reluctance of the prosecutor, Kenneth Gribetz, to put either 'the system' or the 'politics of the defendants' on trial, it appears that this is precisely what will happen. □

Peckish for Love



In this week's City Limits:

The Varnished Truth
Michèle Roberts on Trueish Love in the eighties

Radical Romance
the photo-story they said could never be told

Books Special
Buchi Emecheta, Left Publishing, Laurel Goldman, Science Fiction and Poetry

The Northern Ireland Assembly
a Prior arrangement?

Would You Buy A Second Hand Car From This Man?
John Fordham guides you through the sawdust and sellotape

Would Wagner Have Liked Dallas?
John Wyver on the BBC and The Ring

Harman v Taverne
the battle for the Peckham seat

Maggie's Farm
Steve Bell draws on

The Fijian Rugby Tour
Ric Shearman touches down

PLUS:
The complete guide to films, theatre, politics, music, television, sport, art, jumble sales, radio, children's events, food, poetry, books, news, nightclubs and meetings in London.

Every Thursday 50p
The Londoners' London Guide.

MIDDLE EAST

Keep them guessing

As fierce fighting continues between Iraq and Iran, Claudia Wright describes President Saddam Hussein's agile balancing act

Baghdad

IRAQI POLITICS have always been difficult for Westerners. In mid-1944, before the war was even over, an American intelligence agent cabled Washington to explain that 'the psychology of the Iraqi (is that) he notoriously shifts his bets with the swing of the weathervane.' Whether the Iraqis would back the British, Germans, or Soviets entirely depended, he telegraphed, on which side was winning on the battlefield. There are ample signs in Baghdad today that Saddam Hussein, Iraq's president, shares this approach.

There was a time in Baghdad, before the war with Iran, when you did not see many pictures of Saddam – just the conventional portraits (by Desmond Groves Studios of Harrods) in the lobbies of ministries, banks, hotels and the airport. Then, in the first flush of victory, the pictures proliferated – on tanks, taxis, trucks, hoardings, everywhere. But early this year, as the Iraqi army was driven out of Iran, the pictures disappeared.

For Western diplomats who have little else to go on, this seemed a sign that Saddam was finished. Then, early in the summer, after Iraq's success in defending Basra, the pictures reappeared. There are those who believe that the Iraqi Baath party is such an efficient totalitarian machine that it controls the distribution of such tiny symbols. The sight, therefore, of Saddam's portrait at the entrance to the Tomb of Abbas, in Karbala, one of the Shiite Moslems' most sacred shrines, seems to confirm the Iraqi ruler's repression of his most serious internal challenge from the Shiites.

But that is a Westerner's interpretation. An equally plausible alternative comes from a Baghdad merchant, whose father was the Governor of a Shiite province in the early days of Iraq's independence. In his view, the picture at the Tomb of Abbas shows the Shiites climbing on board Saddam's bandwagon. It is a gesture of their solidarity and support – while he is winning on the battlefield. Saddam's problem each day is to keep winning.

CASUALTIES (about 25,000 dead) and prisoners taken by the Iranians have cut the strength of Iraq's army in half. The call-up of reserves has almost exhausted the supply of men in the 17-40 age group; while the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

appearance of Baghdad and Basra is defiantly normal – restaurant tables are weighed down with imported foodstuffs, affordable despite the prices by the Baathi bourgeoisie – most families have now suffered losses in the fighting. If the president is to hold the line around Basra and Mandali, where the fighting was fiercest this week, he must obtain reinforcements from Jordan, Sudan and other Arab states – if only to relieve the two Iraqi divisions still guarding the rebellious Kurdish areas in the north.

The economic price of the war – about $2 billion every month in lost oil revenues, and in arms and imports – is still being paid by Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the Gulf Emirates. But they require an agile balancing act from Saddam. Once furious at the Saudis for producing too much oil and driving OPEC prices down, Iraqi officials must now bite their tongues. American restrictions on a joint Saudi-Iraqi-Jordanian air defence system, existing American bases in Oman and a new one planned for Bahrain no longer draw the criticism they would have generated two years ago.

But Iraqi policy towards the Arabs is not entirely toothless, and in an interview on 26 September the president went out of his way to show what he meant. Asked about Iraq's relationship with the Palestinian group, al-Assifa, Saddam recited the condemnation of terrorism to be expected of Heads of State, but then added greater sympathy for its leader Abu Nidal, coupled with an implied endorsement of his presence in Iraq, than has ever been expressed publicly by Iraqi officials before:

> You are describing Abu Nidal as a terrorist, but I am not describing him in the same terms . . . We do not encourage terrorism, but this Arab or that Arab may visit Iraq, just as he may visit London . . . Abu Nidal is an Arab militant who may pass by Iraq and stay a month or two, a week or a day, in Baghdad. He is dealt with, treated as an Arab. We should not have the right of interfering in the affairs of his politics.

This was going further than the president needed to go. But he went further still, mentioning several recent incidents which, by implication, he identified as Abu Nidal actions: the assassination of a Kuwaiti diplomat in New Delhi on 4 June, attacks on United Arab Emirate diplomats in Kuwait on 23 August and Bombay on 26 August, and further attacks, one fatal, on 16 September against Kuwaiti diplomats in Madrid and Karachi.

Hussein went on to say that if 'people take the . . . individual armed course in expressing their cause, we can also understand the circumstances . . . but not at all ever support any actio· f this sort . . . we sympathise with the cause, not with the methods.' But what exactly is the cause Saddam was referring to? Why mention the details, if only to deny Iraqi complicity or foreknowledge?

In an interview at Abu Nidal's office the next day, the group's spokesman told me that his group was responsible for the attack on the Israeli Ambassador in London in June, and that the attacks on Kuwait and UAE officials were intended to force the release of Palestinians under arest in those states. At the beginning of 1982, the UAE arrested at least 15 Palestinians, many of them supporters of Abu Nidal. Kuwait also, according to the spokesman, has imprisoned several Palestinians.

TWO YEARS AGO, Saddam tried to mobilise the Gulf States behind his own 'Pan-Arab Charter' but that was supplanted by the American-backed Saudi plan for a 'Gulf Co-operation Council' (GCC). Collaboration among the GCC members in defence planning and internal security has been directed against the leftist, anti-American Palestinian factions, including Abu Nidal's group. While the Iraqi president would do nothing openly to upset his allies in the GCC, he may have intended his remarks about Abu Nidal as an indirect caution to Kuwait and the UAE. He may also intend a similar caution for King Hussein of Jordan, his closest personal ally in the war with Iran, and for Yasser Arafat, not to move too far towards acceptance of the Reagan administration's terms for a Palestinian peace settlement.

If so, Saddam runs the risk of sacrificing the modest gains Iraq has made this year with the Reagan Administration. For weeks, Iraqi officials have been talking privately about resumption of diplomatic relations with Washington (cut in 1967, informally repaired last year). In Washington there has been a year-long argument between the intelligence community and pro-Israel congressmen on one side and US trade officials on the other, over how far to relax restrictions on American trade with Baghdad. In March, Administration officials announced the lifting of several restrictions because 'Iraq has significantly reduced its support for terrorism.' This cleared the way for the export of Lockheed cargo aircraft. But Gates Learjet, builder of small executive jets, was not so fortunate in its bid for a US export licence last month.

Saddam could expect that his remarks might disturb the delicate state of his relations with the US and with Britain and France also, though he is getting substantial help from each of them. The US is now providing satellite photographs to assist the Iraqi air force over Iran, Britain is supplying reconnaissance equipment, together with training for Iraqi NCOs, and France is meeting substantial contracts for Mirages, Roland air defence systems, and Exocet missiles. After a long lull in deliveries, the Soviet Union has recently delivered about a dozen MIG-25s and other equipment. Other Western and Soviet-built arms are being shipped through Egypt, Jordan and Kuwait.

Saddam's game with the superpowers requires a great deal of agility, plus a measure of surprise and unpredictability. He is trying to encourage Washington against a tilt towards Iran, but he does not want to push the Soviet Union any further in Iran's direction either. The Americans do not want to provide satellite pictures of Iranian targets, but feel obliged to offer something to keep up with the Soviet arms trade. This game could go on a long time. □

DISARMAMENT

Reagan's spasm

Peter Pringle reports on the American government's attempts to discredit the peace movement

Washington

IT WAS ONLY a matter of time before President Reagan implied that the American peace movement was run by Communists. That is, undoubtedly, in his simplistic view of the world, what the President believes, and last week he came out of the closet on the issue for the first time. On a campaign stop in Ohio, he said of some anti-nuclear weapons protestors: 'They were demonstrating on behalf of a movement that has swept our country that I think is inspired by not the sincere and honest people who want peace but by some who want the weakening of America, and so are manipulating many honest and sincere people.'

Anyone who has looked seriously at the origins of the American movement to freeze nuclear weapons knows this statement to be absurd. The movement was 'inspired' by old, local, indigenous American peace groups, many of them church groups, and the freeze banner was carried to local ballot boxes and beyond to Capitol Hill, not by well-known Soviet-dominated organisations such as the World Peace Council, but by an extraordinary coalition of citizens across the social and political spectrum.

But the temptation to search wildly for 'Reds under the bed' is an American disease that, despite its discredited past, is abroad in this nation once more. It is possible to shrug off the latest spasm of the disease as merely

The MINORITY RIGHTS GROUP'S latest Reports:

mrg

- **DIEGO GARCIA – A CONTRAST TO THE FALKLANDS**
- **INTERNATIONAL ACTION AGAINST GENOCIDE**
- **HAITIAN REFUGEES IN THE U.S.A.**
- **THE BAHA'IS OF IRAN**

– price £1.20 each, from MRG, 36 Craven St., Lohdon WC2, or from good bookshops.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

an attempt by the Reaganites to divert attention from the country's unemployment, now nudging a post-World War 2 high, or from car sales being at a 21-year low. However, the evidence suggests the disease is more widespread.

Let's take last week's epidemic. Apart from the President's Ohio outburst (which horrified his advisers, who had been telling him for months to lay off such dirty tricks) there were also strong words from Senator Jeremiah Denton, the Vietnam war prisoner turned latter-day Communist witch-hunter. Denton declared, on the Senate floor, that an organisation called 'Peace Links', run by Betty Bumpers, the wife of the Democratic Senator from Arkansas, Dale Bumpers, was being advised by organisations that are 'either Soviet-controlled or openly sympathetic with, and advocates for, Communist foreign policy objectives.'

Next day, the increasingly conservative *Washington Post*, still seen by some Americans as too liberal to handle, predictably rapped the President over the knuckles for impugning the patriotism of the hundreds of thousands of Americans now in the peace movement, and joined in a storm of protest over Denton's remarks. 'Peace Links' was a perfectly respectable organisation containing several wives of prominent members of American society, said the *Post*. But then it warned that one of the groups advising 'Peace Links', the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), was a 'Soviet front', and another American women's peace group, Women Strike for Peace, had connections to a second 'front', the Women's International Democratic Federation. 'Why,' asked the *Post*, 'does "Peace Links" abide the taint that even the slightest connection to a Soviet stooge group imparts?'

The women's groups stormed to the *Post* to protest the remarks and the *Post*, uncharacteristically, backed down. 'After further inquiry,' it admitted, 'we now believe that the available public record does not support our calling (those groups) Soviet front(s) . . . We do not mean to suggest that any of the groups advising "Peace Links" is a Soviet stooge.'

ON THE ONE hand 'Peace Links' was lucky: it got tremendous publicity. As the *Post* pointed out, officials and members of both WILPF and Women Strike for Peace have been to meetings of well-known Soviet-dominated peace groups such as the World Peace Council. Undoubtedly, some members of the American groups are not as stridently anti-Soviet as their critics.

But stooges they are not. WILPF was founded in 1915 when more than 1,000 women from 12 countries met in The Hague to seek ways of ending World War 1. The first president was Jane Addams, an American. Now the membership in the United States is over 15,000, in more than 100 branches. The funds come from membership subscriptions and some large donations from limousine liberals. Women Strike for Peace was founded in Washington in 1961 with the aim of opposing the nuclear arms race and atomic weapons tests. It went on to oppose the Vietnam war.

The immediate result of the President's, Mr Denton's and the *Post*'s outbursts was a heap of publicity for 'Peace Links': it was mentioned no less than six times in four days in two editorials in one of the country's leading newspapers and Mrs Bumpers was interviewed on national radio and television.

But what comes next? The *Post*, in admitting defeat, said, initially, it had got its information from a State Department document, entitled 'Special Report Number 101', listing Communist front organisations, or, as the Department puts it, 'Soviet active measures'. There, for all to see, under a heading 'well-known international fronts', is the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. Document 101 was issued last April – at precisely the time Reagan launched his offensive against the 'freeze' movement and his START proposals for nuclear disarmament. There followed articles in the *Wall Street Journal* and *Reader's Digest* (the President's favourite magazine) impugning the motives of the peace movement organisers.

Next month the peace movement's 'freeze' resolution is on the ballot in several states for the mid-term elections and we should not be surprised if a new symptom of the American disease takes hold: 'Are you now or have you ever been a Soviet front group, or connected with one?' □

WEST GERMANY

Green and pleasant?

Tony Catterall looks at the ideas being discussed by West German ecologists

Cologne

LAST WEEKEND West Germany's political ecologists, the Greens, were not only doubling their share of the vote in the Bavarian state election (to 4.6 per cent). They were also trying to lay foundations of an alliance with organised labour.

The Greens have been heavily criticised by both left and right for opposing without presenting alternatives, for offering catchy proposals without taking costs into account. The unions, in particular, have seen their opposition to economic growth for growth's sake as a threat to jobs.

But with traditional approaches to economic policy manifestly failing – unemployment is now 7.5 per cent of the workforce – the German labour movement is being forced at least to look at alternatives that might be offered. A number of working groups have been set up in factories to consider alternative strategies for their companies, taking their cue from the Lucas Aerospace Combine Shop Stewards' Committee in Britain (*NS* 3 September).

So the Greens took the initiative and organised a three-day conference on 'The Future of Work' at Bielefeld University over the weekend. Although the 2,500 or so participants were overwhelmingly from the 'alternative' political groups, some 10 per cent were trade unionists. There was more of a meeting of minds than the organisers had expected. The conference was to discuss an 'economic-political concept oriented to the life-requirements of the people', as opposed to 'the proposals to boost the economy by more savings and rationalisations at the expense of the working and studying part of the population, at the expense of the peoples of the Third World and at the price of the further destruction of nature.'

Contrary to propaganda from political establishment, the Greens have policies for the economy and for industry. They want investment to deal with problems caused by past industrial neglect. There is plenty of work in pollution control and equipment to clean up the environment, and in products for energy-saving housing, for example.

In a sense, the conference was preaching to the converted. The official West German trades union federation, the DGB, refused to take part. Those trade unionists who risked official displeasure by attending were mainly people who have already accepted the connection between work and the environment. But there was virtual unanaminity for instance, about the alienation at work brought about by new technology, like microprocessors and industrial robots. Not only does new technology – in the short term at least – destroy jobs. For most, it also removes the last elements of skills from manual work.

But a shop steward from Daimler-Benz took a wider view of ecology. His company should not continue to produce so many cars. He was convinced that it would have to show more flexibility, and come up with socially desirable products to put alongside car manufacture. In any case the dramatic collapse of Germany's giant industrial concern, AEG, proves there is no security in an enterprise that is not prepared to adapt and has grown too large to be flexible. In this context, one of the Greens' central planks for industry – decentralisation – seemed to take on new relevance.

Now that contact has been made with the trade unions and areas of agreement established, the Greens intend to build on it with regional conferences and concrete proposals. What the Greens hope for the long term is that union activists will tell their leaders, 'look, we can work with the Greens. If you can't do likewise, we might be forced to join them.'

But it will take time. The traditional union leadership still sees economic growth as the only hope for full employment, and is largely unconcerned about *what* is produced. It also sees the Greens as being in competition with their traditional party, the Social Democrats, and as a threat to the unions' socialist alignment. The Greens would not mind if that alignment were broken, but changing the thinking of the unions about ecology would be a way to change the consciousness of the SPD itself. □

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LETTERS

Labour and the EEC

Denis MacShane, Geneva, Switzerland

Living as I do in a European country that does very well out of not being a Common Market member I feel hesitant about making a comment on the debate launched by Barbara Castle (Letters 1 October). Yet in three years of work here during which I have been in fairly active contact with labour movements in different European countries, west and east, I have yet to meet a socialist (or anyone to the left of democratic socialism) who believes that the cause of progressive and democratic economic and social advance in Europe or the world would be enhanced by British withdrawal.

For an anti-marketeer this presents a problem. Since first joining a trade union and the Labour Party my views have been shaped through comradely discussion, shared activities and the views and beliefs of those whose values I felt in tune with. But what is true at the union branch, union executive or Labour Party level must also be true at the level of relationships with sister organisations and socialist comrades outside of Britain. The plain fact is that whenever British socialists sit down with their comrades from Spain or Greece or France or Scandinavia, whether it is at the level of leaders or rank and file, they are told that a withdrawal of what is still among the most powerful labour movements in Europe from the Common Market would be damaging.

I cannot say what the reaction of European socialists would be to Barbara Castle's proposition of simply implementing Labour policy and challenging the EEC to stop us. Certainly in France the Mitterrand government saw off legal and constitutional attempts to slow down its massive nationalisation programme but then France does not haye an hereditary House of Lords to obstruct and delay. But I do know that that French, Greek and, following, I hope, the Spanish election, Spanish socialists would prefer British socialists to be working with them on joint policies in a European context.

In short, if we have any sense of a comradely relationship with European socialists then we should steel ourselves for immense dismay at a British withdrawal. Perhaps for those who believe that for democratic socialist advance in Britain a British withdrawal from the EEC is both necessary, maybe even sufficient, and urgent, it would be as well to discourage Michael Foot *et al* from participating in international contacts so as to avoid having their will to withdraw sapped by those who believe that socialist advance is more important than formal EEC membership or non-membership.

The ablest Tory

Wilf Garnham, London N10

Barry Jones in his Diary (*NS* 8 October) describes Norman Tebbit as 'the most diseased mind in British politics'. This is a wantonly inaccurate description of the man. In fact, Tebbit is perfectly sane. What bothers Jones is that Tebbit is a skilful and determined class warrior, admittedly a human type that must be unfamiliar, incomprehensible even, to a member of the Parliamentary Labour Party.

Jones also describes Tebbit as a 'quisling son of the working class'. But it is the demoralising policies of Labour and union leaderships that, over the years, have turned huge masses of working people into quislings against their own movement. Union bosses and Labour MPs have worshipped as fervently as Tebbit at the shrine of productivity, and the resultant job-losses have a lot to do with the current demoralisation of the Left. And in any case, the experience of Labour in government has all but totally eradicated what socialist feeling there ever was in the British working class.

We should hardly be surprised if manual workers, seeing the way forward in terms of buying a house and becoming self-employed, rather than in collectively struggling for socialism, draw the obvious political conclusions in ever greater numbers. We should be even less surprised that the great majority of white-collar workers, rather than throw in their lot with a labour movement so obviously ashamed of its own principles, have come to constitute a rock-solid anti-union voting bloc which sees Tebbit as the personification of their deepest political urges.

As long as the 'ideas' of Foot, Shore & Co represent the sum total of working-class politics in Britain, there is little chance of us wiping the baleful smirk off Tebbit's face.

Grey limbo

Kaktus Leach, Sheffield

In the review of *Working Class Childhood* (*NS* 8 October) it is clear that both the author Jeremy Seabrook and the reviewer Anne Smith suffer from the same problem. On the few occasions they drive through the council estates they wear grey-tinted spectacles and then compare the view with their rose-tinted memories.

If there is a limbo they have made one for themselves and I can show anyone who cares to visit me that the traditional working-class virtues such as warmth, humour, resourcefulness and neighbourliness are still alive and well. Unlike consumer durables these virtues can't be seen from a distance.

Labour's purges

Heather Gaebler, Ex-Secretary CLPD Women's Action Committee, London NW11

Patrick Wintour, in his article on Labour Party Conference (*NS* 1 October) refers to divisions within the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy, between an 'alliance of maximalist Bennites, feminists and Trotskyists' on the one hand and, on the other, the 'cautious core' based on the CLPD Secretary. However, it must be said that a blanket inclusion of 'feminists' in the unholy alliance is inaccurate and misleading. The disagreements between the groups are over which tactics are the most effective for opposing the NEC's Register. While the 'alliance' argues for straightforward rejection of the Register, the 'cautious core' favours a campaign to amend the Labour Party constitution in a way which would limit the arbitrary powers of the NEC and would define precise rules under which pressure groups may operate.

In fact, a number of feminists, who are also members of the CLPD Women's Action Committee agree with this latter approach. The impression that feminists share the position of the alliance is created by the few individuals who currently control the CLPD Women's Action Committee. These comrades have expressed their support for a simple rejection of the Register despite clear indications to the contrary that this position would not maximise opposition to the Register. This view is not shared by all CLPD WAC members.

Over the counter

Paul Howarth, Branch Secretary, Society of Civil & Public Servants DHSS, Oxford

Paul Foot's piece about King Lear and DHSS staff in Oxford (Diary, 24 September) was quite amusing. But his perception of life in Oxford DHSS was more akin to that of Gloucester after his eyes had been plucked out.

We do not have a responsibility to tell claimants where to live and we do not advise claimants what to do before being interviewed at the office. However, we do have a responsibility to administer the Supplementary Benefit legislation in such a way as to promote the welfare of claimants and meet urgent need (Sections 27 and 4 of the Supplementary Benefits Act 1976).

The problem is that we do not have the resources to exercise these functions properly. Because of appalling staff shortages in the office we have to decide priorities in such a way that some claimants are bound to suffer. The situation is so sad that some offices including Oxford have taken strike action in an attempt to get more staff. I hope your paper will help to put pressure on Ministers to ensure that the social security system is administered in the way intended in the legislation and not in the piecemeal fashion we have to operate now.

Meanwhile, rather than suggesting that DHSS staff sleep rough for a week to learn about poverty, I would suggest that Paul Foot spends a week on the counter at a DHSS office to find out what it is really like to try to alleviate that poverty.

Googlies and flippers

Charles Catchpole, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey

In her defence of umpires who disregarded appeals by Pakistani cricketers (Letters 8 October), Jane Baird totally misses the point.

Implicit racism and the very real needs of Third World cricketers are minor issues compared with the anti-socialist bias of cricket. Like soccer and rugby, cricket is an inherently elitist, individualistic game. It ruthlessly exploits the so-called competitive spirit, setting man against man, woman against woman, in a degrading scramble for power, status and wealth.

Teams are selected on grounds of imagined 'merit' – itself a dubious, socially divisive concept – with scant regard for correct political attitudes or social awareness.

Is there no sport which a caring, concerned, gentle, non-competitive socialist can follow?

The matter with Britain

Prof. Bernard Crick, Birkbeck College, London WC1

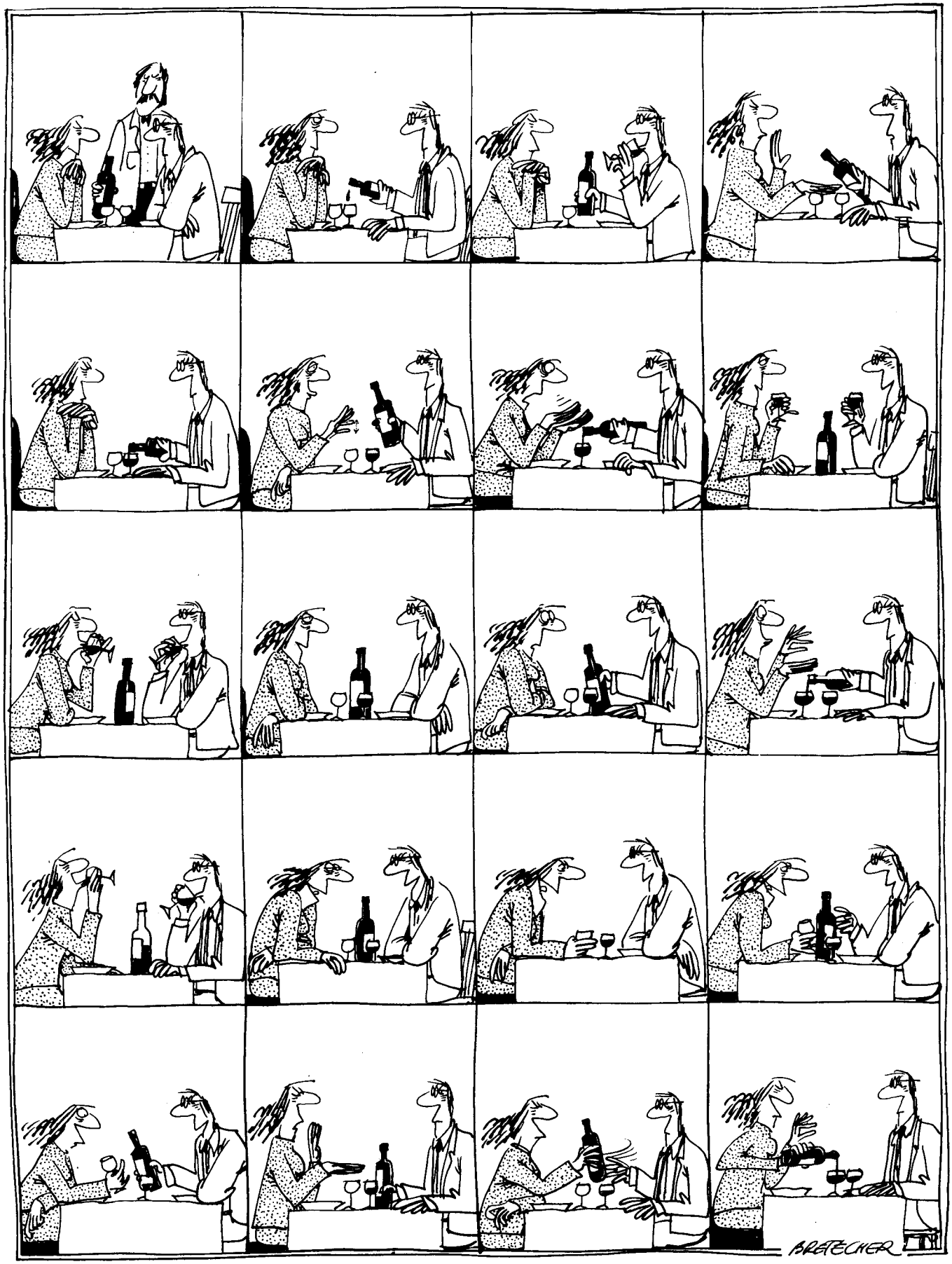
My lead review of Samuel H. Beer's *Britain Against Itself* (*NS* 8 October) had to be cut heavily at the last moment without giving me a chance to make my own cuts.

All that might appear to those who do not know Beer's earlier writings is that here is a simple case of a bad book. But my first (and deleted) paragraph made clear that I thought him the preeminent American student of British politics in our time (apologies to Richard Rose), unique for his blending of theory and history, but now misled by his British friends whom he names in his Preface, now all (with one exception dear to me) Social Democrats or neuters. So not a simple case of a bad book, but a complex sad story of a grand old man misled by his friends.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BRETECHER

NO WINE FOR ME, PLEASE



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Anna Coote

A political metamorphosis

The Diary of Beatrice Webb: Volume I 1873-1892:
Glitter Around and Darkness Within
edited by Norman and Jeanne MacKenzie
Virago £15

SUCH battles rage through this volume that one reaches the end quite drained by vicarious combat. First, there is the struggle of a young woman in the late 19th century to learn about the world she lives in and understand it in political terms. Having received no formal education, she had to start from scratch: 'Political economy is *hateful* – most hateful drudgery . . . I *must* master it.' She did, and a prodigious amount besides.

At the same time, this dutiful daughter of a well-to-do businessman – debutante, society hostess, last-married of nine sisters, left to care for an ailing parent – was fighting the powerful conventions of her time in order to *be* something in her own right. She brought to this battle a curious mixture of dogged confidence and self-doubt. 'I can't help feeling that could I only devote myself to one subject, I could do something . . .' And yet, 'why should I, wretched little frog that I am, try to puff myself up into a professional?'

Gradually, her conviction grew that political strategies ought to be based on information gathered from detailed observations of people's lives. She was determined not only to conduct such observations herself, but also to impress her view on others. Her first venture, in 1883, was a clandestine visit to the textile town of Bacup in Lancashire, home of her mother's family before they made good. Passing herself off as 'Miss Jones', a farmer's daughter, she was 'received into the charmed circle of artisan and small bourgeois life' and learned at first hand about the co-operatives pioneered in that part of the country. Though Beatrice regarded the people of Bacup as a foreign species, in whom civilised behaviour was rather unexpected ('I was surprised at their fairmindedness, and at the kindliness of their view of men and things'), she was on her way to a better understanding than most of her class.

It became a source of amazement to her that politicians could get away with knowing so little, and she later reflected, after listening to a parliamentary debate on the Irish question in which her much-loved Joseph Chamberlain had played a starring role:

> I felt even to have an opinion of any kind it was necessary to understand the history and present condition of Ireland. I wondered, as I have often wondered before, why political workers do not study the *basis of facts* which underlie all these questions.

By 1885 she was working as a volunteer rent collector in Whitechapel, and resolved to use this experience to 'understand the conditions of the working class in the way of "housing" ' and to examine the role of the state: how far could it foster social responsibility; how effective could it be in attempting to 'supplement by direct constructive activity the work of voluntary enterprise and individual effort'? There were no established bodies of data or theory on this topic. Beatrice was breaking new ground.

As she moved towards a close collaboration with Charles Booth, with whom she pioneered a major statistical inquiry into the lives of Londoners, she determined to write her first article for publication, 'to explain thoroughly what I mean by social diagnosis'. It was ten months in gestation, during which time Beatrice struggled to re-shape existing theoretical frameworks and to develop her own critique of contemporary economics. 'My article', she wrote in December 1886, 'is to open with a demonstration that the proper subject matter for economic science is human nature':

> Social science being the science of 'men in combination', economics must be one section of this science, dealing with some special combining forces . . . Then I must turn to the economists to show how they have defined the subject matter of their science to be *wealth*, and I must show the absurdity of that . . . [tracing its] historical origin in the mercantile theory . . .

Sandwiching 'holidays' devoted to social investigation between long stretches of intensive reading while she cared for her invalid father in the country, Beatrice built up her own specialism – analysing and reporting on the London docks, the co-operative movement, the 'sweating' trades (for the latter inquiry, working incognito as a trouser finisher in an East End sweat-shop).

It would be hard to imagine a more honest account of an individual's political metamorphosis: the reader can follow her through each stage, as she is compelled by the weight of her own evidence to turn against deeply-imbued conservative instincts and reject *laissez-faire* individualism. 'At last I am a socialist!' she proclaimed in 1890 at the age of 32 (in the tone of one who was feeling to make sure no bones were broken); 'and this is where observation and study have led me, in spite of training, class bias etc.'

ALL THE while, Beatrice was wrestling with her passion for Joseph Chamberlain, the charismatic political leader who looked her over as a possible wife in 1884. She recognised him as an impossibly domineering man from the moment they opened negotiations, strolling through the gardens of her family home:

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> 'It pains me to hear any of my views controverted', and with this preface he begins with stern exactitude to lay down the articles of his political creed. I remain modestly silent, but noticing my silence he remarks that he requires 'intelligent sympathy' from women. 'Servility, Mr Chamberlain,' think I, not sympathy but intelligent servility: what many women give men, but the difficulty lies in changing one's master, in jumping from one *tone* of thought to the exact opposite – with *intelligence* . . .

She didn't trust his politics and she wouldn't play the game on his terms. Turning away from a man to whom she was so powerfully attracted was almost more than she could bear, but she couldn't forgo the freedom to pursue her own ideals. As the years passed, Beatrice became convinced that spinsterhood was the inevitable consequence of her 'deadly fight between the intellectual and the sensual', in which the intellect had triumphed:

> I must check those feelings which are the expression of physical instinct craving for satisfaction; but God knows celibacy is as painful to a woman (even from the physical standpoint) as it is to a man. It could not be more painful than it is to a woman.

When she finally gave in to the courtship of Sidney Webb, it was as though she had toiled long enough, and was lowering herself gratefully into a warm bath of emotional security.

For one who was so clear-headed about so much, Beatrice was unusually confused about the role of women. She had rigid ideas about what ought to be – rules from which she blithely excepted herself: 'A woman *should* be more or less dependent and receptive . . . It is not womanly to thrust yourself before the world.'

She was well aware of the privileges men enjoyed and the disadvantages suffered by women who tried to make their way in a man's world. She often had difficulty getting men to take her ideas seriously, and described many occasions on which they patronised her. She knew that her enforced celibacy – the source of so much distress in her late twenties and early thirties – was a function of the moral double-standard: 'If I were a man, this creature [her 'sensual nature'] would be free, though not dissolute, in its morals, a lover of women . . .' Yet in this one area she failed to apply the principle to which she adhered so firmly in all her work: to draw political conclusions from what she observed.

Perhaps it was just too much fun being an exceptional woman, moving freely in the company of men who admired her because she was not like their wives, using her feminine charm to 'smooth out obstacles' in the way of her investigations. She may also have sensed that to espouse the feminist cause would have been too much of an impediment to her ambitions – as her encounter with the trade union leader Henry Broadhurst suggests:

> His suspicions of my intentions were completely dissipated when he heard I was an anti-suffrage woman. He immediately thought me sensible and sound. 'When I hear a woman's name talked of I am immediately prejudiced against her, but I can see you are as different as pitch from diamonds.' So he chatted on about socialism, trade unionism, and his own complaints, showing every sign of being confidential.

Beatrice suffered from what feminists today call the 'queen bee syndrome': *she'd* made it, and believed all other women could if they would simply try harder. ('The only way in which we can convince the world of our power is to show it!') To her credit, however, she eventually changed her mind, and made it clear in her autobiography, *My Apprenticeship*, that she understood why she had failed to make the connections earlier on.

This diary is a delight to read not only for the way it shows the author's personality and politics unfolding but also for her narrative skills, her descriptions of character, her humour. She perceives the philosopher Herbert Spencer, for example, as leading 'a sort of spider-like existence; sitting alone in the centre of his theoretical web, catching facts, and weaving them again into theory . . . He having mastered thought is a slave to thinking.' And her account of her first visit to Chamberlain's Birmingham home is a malicious gem:

> Inside there is very much *taste* and all very bad . . . No books, no work, no music, not even a harmless antimacassar, to relieve the oppressive richness of the satin-covered furniture. Here on Tuesday afternoon, 29 January, I find the whole family assembled (except its head) ready to receive me. Presently the great man himself emerges . . . and gives me a constrainedly polite welcome. Are we about to take part in a funeral procession, think I, and sink oppressed into a perfectly constructed armchair . . .

The next three volumes cannot come fast enough. □

BIOGRAPHY

Nigel Cross

Hard times

Gissing: A Life in Books
JOHN HALPERIN *OUP* £18.50

'There is something in my books which English people really *dislike*', George Gissing wrote towards the end of the 19th century. He was not exaggerating. For half the 20th century most of his novels have been out of print. Over the last twenty years academics have been chipping away at the relative obscurity encasing this major and prolific late Victorian novelist. Largely inspired by the dedication and enthusiasm of a French professor, Pierre Coustillas, most of Gissing's work has now been reissued accompanied by a flurry of critical and biographical monographs. In spite of this limited revival Gissing remains a shadowy figure to the general reader – he is nothing like as well known as his contemporary Thomas Hardy. Only *New Grub Street* has achieved anything resembling a classic reputation. The rest of his novels, a dozen of which John Halperin claims are first-rate, remain obscure. Perhaps this is because, alone among his contemporaries (Kipling, Conrad, Hardy, James), he is deemed, by both cinema and television, too dreary to translate into film.

John Halperin describes Gissing's life as a 'life in books' and Gissing described himself as 'a machine for producing volumes'. There can be few writers who have done less and written more – 27 books in 25 years. The outline of Gissing's life can be made to sound dramatic enough. Brilliant classical student of unassuming origin is dismissed from college for pilfering on behalf of a 17-year-old prostitute. Is sentenced to one month's hard labour followed by self-exile in America. Survives on a diet of peanuts in Chicago. Returns to England. 1878: start of a London literary life, aged 20. Marriage to his (unreformed) prostitute – her death, alone, in 1888 from 'drink and syphilis, cold and hunger'. Second marriage in 1891 to another working-class girl: 'Educated English girls will not face poverty in marriage'. Disintegration of marriage, sons farmed out to care of fortunately unmarried sisters. Wife's admission to a lunatic asylum. Last relationship, when unhappiness is ingrained, with the French translator of his novels. Exile and death in France in 1903.

This is really all there is to tell of Gissing's non-literary life. Ashamed of his proletarian wives, he led a furtive existence and rarely mixed in society, even in book society. It was only towards the end of his life, after the publication of *New Grub Street*, that he saw much of his fellow authors. He took no part in the intellectual or political concerns of his day beyond signing a petition against imperialism and war. Apart from a passion for everything ancient, which led to two trips to Italy and one to Greece, and which was rooted as much in his hatred of the modern world as in his admiration for Greeks and Romans, he had, or could afford, no interest outside his writing. As a biographical subject Gissing is on the thin-blooded, self-pitying, inactive side. Unlike his friend Wells, for instance, Gissing's life is really only interesting insofar as it illuminates his fiction.

Halperin's *Gissing* is a valuable interim study of the scattered published evidence. Most of the new, if relatively trivial, biographical detail he seems to have gleaned from Coustillas's mysteriously unpublished biography which, if it ever appears, is bound to be the definitive version. The real value of Halperin's book is in its discussion of the novels and their relationship to the often pathetic details of Gissing's life, especially, in Halperin's phrase, 'the pulverizing effects of poverty'. For it is made clear that Gissing's best work was written in his darkest moments; a case of 'misery goading art to life'.

Halperin's neat identification of the main preoccupations of Gissing's novels (sex, class and money) helps to explain why his work is gradually acquiring a modest cult status, not least, I should guess, among *New Statesman* readers. To be more specific, two

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of Gissing's central themes are the rôle of women in the sex war and the struggles of the working-classes against Malthusian and Mendelian certainties and capitalist economics. This has led, among the lazy and the misinformed, to the supposition that Gissing was a feminist (*The Odd Women*) and a socialist (*Workers in the Dawn*). He was neither. His ideal woman was middle-class; a good housekeeper and a good lay; an accomplished pianist; educated enough to appreciate her husband's concerns; ambitious for her family; unambitious for herself – more or less a sexy angel in the house. As for socialism, Gissing despised the mass of people he was forced to live among and he hated what he saw as the levelling tendencies of capitalism as much as he idolised paternalistic aristocracy.

His outstanding achievement was to turn his personal and sometimes repulsive obsessions with sex, class and money (he craved an abundance of all three) into great gloomy novels which remain the most thoroughgoing studies of the late Victorian class system at its nether levels. And if Gissing was no feminist, more than any other novelist of his sex he explored the female character and wrote honestly about women. A contemporary reviewer noted, 'No novelist has taken more pains to understand the condition of the average woman's life to-day, to study her ambitions, to mete out to her an austere kind of justice'. But his novels are more than literary quarries for social history, they are gripping narratives of a personal hell – where hell is, for the most part, inclination frustrated by lack of means.

Gissing liked to think that his work would be valued by posterity. He was sure, for example, that his novel *Thyrza*, set in working-class Lambeth and 'an attack on all measures of reform', would be read by a discerning public when Rider Haggard's books were mere ashes and waste paper. But the British public still prefers Rider Haggard's adventure stories to Gissing's grim mirror. For the discerning few, however, John Halperin's study is an invaluable guide through Gissing's twenty-three novels. He reserves his highest praise for *New Grub Street, Sleeping Fires, In the Year of the Jubilee, The Whirlpool, Will Warburton* and *The Paying Guest*. All are now in print. □

BOOK TRADE

Jim McGuigan

Upmarket, downmarket

From Author to Reader

PETER H. MANN *Routledge* £8.95

The book is dead: long live the book! In the post-McLuhan era the book – described by W.L. Saunders as the 'on-line, real-time random access storage device' – is still very much with us, regardless of alarming predictions to the contrary. Despite the dramatic expansion of electronic media and the manifest hegemony of the visual image in contemporary culture, that old-fashioned means of communication, the book, is forever doing a Mark Twain – belying reports of its demise.

During the last couple of decades book publication has, in fact, increased significantly. 18,487 new titles were published in the United Kingdom in 1962. Since then the annual figure has always been above 20,000 a year. 37,382 were published in 1980. These encouraging figures, however, do not of course take account of print-run sizes, the key factor in pricing books. Nor can we ignore declining exports or public expenditure cutbacks in book buying, both of which are worrying publishers and booksellers. But the future of the indigenous book industry is not reducible to the general economic crisis. As they say in the trade, 'books are different.'

Peter Mann, of Sheffield University, began studying various aspects of the UK book industry in 1967 with a view to analysing its problems and recommending solutions. He has produced reports on topics with such apparently diverse concerns as readership of romantic fiction for Mills and Boon and readership of the modern 'literary' novel for the Arts Council. *From Author to Reader* collects together much of Mann's own findings and includes a mass of information from other sources. It is packed with statistical data on, among other things, publishing, distribution of bookshops and sales levels; book buying by the general public, public libraries, universities and local authorities; and the social demography of book buying and borrowing.

Social analysis in general and the study of cultural artefacts like books in particular takes several different forms, ranging from abstract theorising to basic information gathering. There is little point in theory for its own sake. But the simple accumulation of data without adequate conceptualisation is also futile. When he tries to explain facts Mann relies on banal reasoning and uncritical functionalism. We are told, for example, 'All authors of books are initiators in a chain of communication. The author has something he wants to communicate to someone via the medium of the book'.

On authorship, though, Mann does attempt to construct an elementary model for explaining the distinction between 'high' and 'mass' culture. According to Mann these cultural levels operate in a kind of harmonious multiplicity, catering without conflict for different taste publics.

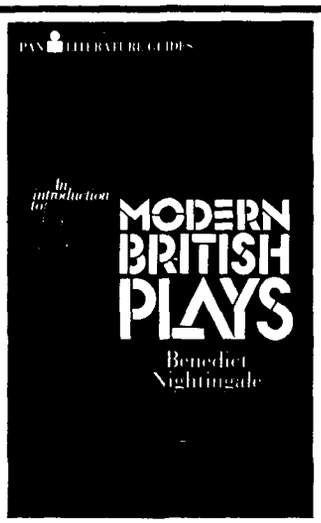
Alternative forms of writing are located along a continuum of variable relations between author, content and reader. At the high cultural extreme are 'author' books. This is how Mann tries to negotiate the 'seriousness' issue. He argues that serious 'literary' and 'scholarly' writing is produced primarily to satisfy the author and perhaps, as a second thought, to interest a minority of enthusiasts or peers. The argument is qualified specifically with reference to the 'literary' novel which is to be distinguished from entertaining and escapist 'light fiction' because it is realistic and intellectually challenging ('personal problems of characters . . . derived from reality') – no post-structuralist excesses here.

Further along the continuum we come to middle-range books like *Civilization* and *The Ascent of Man* which combine authorship with commercial success. At the other extreme the author dissolves and books are produced entirely to satisfy a pre-determined readership demand, that is to make money. Popular romances and thrillers are generally of this kind. ▶

An introduction to 50

MODERN BRITISH PLAYS

Benedict Nightingale



'A superb piece of scholarship that packs in more information about the drama of this century than any work I know'
Michael Billington in STAGE GUARDIAN

'Mr Nightingale makes a sound case for every choice and writes of each with taste and judgement'
John Barber in THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

'He covers the 20th century with cool reason, incisive argument and critical rigour'
Michael Coveney in FINANCIAL TIMES

ISBN 033 0 26679 9 480 pages £2.95

PAN LITERATURE GUIDES

Pan Books Ltd., 18-21 Cavaye Place, London SW10 9PG

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Somewhat against his own argument Mann insists that Mills and Boon writers are actually quite talented, but hedges his bets by remarking that 'any popular romantic novelist or thriller writer can actually *communicate* far better than some highly esteemed literary novelists; the prime difference lies in the content of their communication'. This is an incredible exercise in stating the obvious while neglecting all the interesting questions about the social construction of literary categories and the actual interchange and tensions between them. □

SCULPTURE
John Spurling

For pigeons

Victorian Sculpture
BENEDICT READ *Yale* £30

Whatever happened to Victorian sculpture? A few exhibitions recently have nibbled at the edges of it, but between the 1830s and 1870s there is a great white unexplored space on the map, as Benedict Read discovered when he was asked to lecture on the subject to students at the Courtauld. The book he has produced is essentially the first map of the subject, a large, detailed survey, whose main outlines are supplied by such practical matters as working methods, patronage and the requirements of architects. Many of the landmarks, of course, are familiar: the Albert Memorial, Nelson's Column, Boadicea and Richard Coeur de Lion at Westminster, the Hyde Park Achilles, to mention only those in London. But who made them? The names of Foley, Bell, Theed, Calder-Marshall, Baily, Thomas Thorneycroft and Richard Westmacott are less familiar.

There are scores more, whose busts, statues, idealised groups, funeral monuments solicit our attention in churches, streets, squares and gardens all over the country, but seldom receive it. Most of us walk past Victorian sculpture as if it were invisible or put there purely for the pigeons. The implicit assumption is that, though it may once have satisfied our ancestors' need to remind themselves of military heroism, civic virtue, moral improvement or social progress, it is no good as sculpture.

Read does not enter this forgotten territory for the purpose of re-colonising it. He seldom concerns himself with the sculpture's artistic value, only with its existence. But, as any amateur historian knows, exploration almost inevitably leads to colonisation and one can hardly doubt, with the Victorian revival already in full swing elsewhere, that we shall soon be looking at all this neglected marble and bronze with new and possessive eyes.

Shall we say that it's good, after all? Some of it clearly is, in a minor way, and especially in its setting and for its purpose – Read allows himself a rare word of praise for the pediment of Todmorden Town Hall and one might also cite John Thomas's Water Gardens at the head of the Serpentine and many individual pieces of portrait sculpture. But Read reminds us that 'in the mid-Victorian period sculpture could be said to have ranked virtually as an industry' and certainly judged as art much of it is negligible, for the simple reason that, both in form and content, it is second-hand. These pieces were, with a few exceptions, goods designed for a market by professionals who could ransack the past for a style but seldom cared to think or feel freshly for themselves. I hope someone – perhaps Read himself – will follow this first successful fact-finding expedition with a second, in which he will analyse what one might call the shoddiness of Victorian sculpture, its failure to be more than a home industry. □

Harry Clifton

Monsoon girl

In the airconditioned drone
Of a room we rent by the hour,
You go to the telephone
Lovely and naked, to put through a call
For drinks, or hire a car
To take us home.

Your nudity dapples the walls
With shadows, and splashes the mirrors
Like a vision, in the blue light
That bathes you, a pleasure-girl
On a lost planet, sincere
But only at night.

Outside, it was rain
For weeks, months on end . . .
We'll come here again
As we did before, where Chinese women,
Blank and inscrutable, attend
Nighly to our linen.

We'll come again
In drunkenness, for the child's-play
Of lovemaking, or to part the rain
Like curtains of jet beads,
And dream the rainy months away
On pampered beds

Where forgetfulness lies down
With political power
After hours, in a tangle of legs
And juices, a world turned upside down,
And I feed on the lotus-flower
Of your delicate sex.

At two, we'll be driven back
Through darkened Bangkok
Already tomorrow. There will be roads
Closed, and a dope squad
Flashing its query through window glass,
Letting us pass . . .

There will be lights
In Chinatown, sampans on the river –
The poor starting early. Elsewhere the night
Will separate us, having seeded within you
Miscarriage of justice forever,
And the rain will continue.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SHORTER REVIEWS

Whose File is it Anyway?

RUTH N. COHEN *NCCL* £2.25

We are probably the most monitored people to have existed: almost every glancing contact with authority generates bumf and records. Ruth N. Cohen takes a strongly civil-libertarian line in arguing for public access to records in every sphere, from education to medicine. She's perceptive in discerning that bureaucratic and mystifying role which records play, pointing out that they have a life of their own, so that, in an awful inversion of reality, the living, breathing subject becomes merely a shadowy figure behind the file. Records also equal power, and their secrecy fortifies this: practitioners often use files to justify their actions retrospectively. Files can be shaped to demonstrate the logic of a practitioner's behaviour, and the deviance of the subject.

But the bulk of Cohen's booklet is practical: a handful of case studies where the public has had access to their files, and the consequences. One of the most interesting is a Portsmouth maternity hospital where pregnant women keep their own records. This system has operated successfully for almost a decade, side-stepping thoughtless and pejorative medical comment as well as saving time and money. Even more astonishing is the London Education Guidance Centre where children with behavioural problems are allowed to see their records with a member of staff. Here again staff have been forced to question their assumptions: as Cohen says, the system works with individuals who have been assumed to be least able to cope with it.

She handles comprehensively and answers convincingly the practical problems of such a system, but the booklet leaves one with the great imponderable: how to generate the political will to make such things more widely acceptable.

Anne Karpf

Stuff of Sleep and Dreams: Experiments in Literary Psychology

LEON EDEL *Chatto* £15

Psychology and psychoanalysis have not always combined well with literary studies. Initially, Freud considered writing a 'substitute gratification', and although he eventually abandoned this position, his popularisers had already twisted it into the notion that art derives from neurosis: as Lionel Trilling put it, disagreeing, 'that the wound is the price of the bow'. Above all, professional critics' amateur psychology has impaired much biography in the 'English tradition'.

Leon Edel, like Trilling, recognises that neurosis conditions, rather than originates, art. His use of literary psychology – a study of what writings express of their creators – generally avoids excess (and always jargon); he believes, rightly, that it contributes to criticism and biography as one tool among many, that it cannot reveal all, merely provide 'a few extraordinary glimpses'.

In this collection, an outline of Edel's method precedes twelve illustrative experiments, mostly excerpts or offshoots from larger biographical undertakings – concerning Henry James, the Bloomsbury set, Thoreau, Joyce, Willa Cather – and the editorship of Alice James's diary and Edmund Wilson's papers. The psychological element is prominent to varying degrees. Essays on Wilson, Eliot and Cather strike a near-perfect balance in connecting art and artist; usually, though, Edel shows too much or too little discrimination in applying his procedures.

Debunking the Thoreau myth and explaining Kipling's choice of wife, Edel is decidedly unspectacular, as though consciously avoiding any hint of extravagance. Elsewhere, he forgets his own injunction against psychoanalysing the dead, treating certain subjects as cases for posthumous diagnosis. With Alice James, he has some success; with Woolf and Auden far less. Meanwhile, Edel's explanations of Rex Stout's selection of 'Nero Wolfe' for his sleuth and of why Hugh Walpole mis-dedicated his last novel '. . . to the great author of *The Turning of the Screw*' recall the fanciful flights that occasionally marred his magisterial life of Henry James.

David Montrose

Chimpanzee Politics

FRANS DE WAAL *Cape* £8.95

This book purports to be based upon detailed observations over a period of years of the social organisation of a large chimpanzee colony at Burgers' Zoo in Arnhem. Certainly all the necessary elements are present for the production of a good popular science book. This promise is unfulfilled. The translator, Janet Milnes, has done her task well, but the author has been unable – or unwilling – to resist sensationalising his subject. In this he has been aided and abetted by Desmond Morris's journalistic foreword claiming that this book demonstrates that 'the roots of politics are older than humanity'. Frans de Waal follows the same style, littering the pages with references to Machiavelli as the individual chimpanzees pursue their 'lust for power'.

One can respond by drawing attention to the difficulties raised by the work itself. Many would question the possibility of making any significant statements about social organisation based on colony studies. The environment is alien, and this particular example is no exception. The chimpanzees are over-crowded, over-fed and subject to regular interference from outside. But such a response fails to deal with the fundamental flaw which is Frans de Waal's attempt to impose on his analysis human motives, characteristics and values. Chimpanzees are not human and explanations of their behaviour and social organisation within these limits probably tell us more about the author than the chimpanzees. Victorian anthropologists made enough bizarre errors when looking at other human cultures with the eyes of 19th-century Europe to steer away all but the most gullible from extending this kind of distortion of perception into the animal world.

Over-all not pop sociobiology at its most convincing or dangerous. Nevertheless, the fact that the author concludes that the main lesson his study of the colony has taught him is that hierarchy is a valuable cohesive factor in social organisations may merit suitably edited abstracts appearing in the *Sun* or *Reader's Digest*.

Glyn Ford

The Law Lords

ALAN PATERSON *Macmillan* £12

This book will be of real interest to students of the English judicial process. Paterson describes it as an exercise in 'role analysis' within an interactionist framework; his aim is to demonstrate that decision-making in the Appellate committee of the House of Lords must be understood as a 'social process'. *The Law Lords* is exhaustively researched, well written and deserves to occupy a prominent place.

Nevertheless, the assumptions upon which Paterson bases his study ultimately undermine the integrity of his conclusions. The book is dedicated to Lord Reid, for whose memory Paterson obviously has a great deal of personal respect. Disappointingly, however, it turns out to be more of a celebration than a critique. We are told, without comment, that Lord Reid 'regarded contact with ordinary people of all grades of society as essential for any judge in order to obtain a proper view of public opinion'. The author finishes by acquiescing in Lord Pearson's statement: 'You have got to take Her Majesty's judges . . . as representative of popular opinion.'

In the end Paterson's attempt at objectivity is not strong enough to overcome his reverential approach to his subject matter. For example, he is confident that, even given the Law Lords' professional and class homogeneity, their 'interaction and socialisation' go some way to 'ensuring the objectivity' of their judgments. And yet the overwhelming effect of his (very rigorous) technical analysis of decisions between 1957 and 1973 is to emphasise the subjective factors. Thus, while claiming to be scientific, Paterson's study paradoxically helps to perpetuate the Law Lords' inscrutability.

What is most infuriating is that the empirical methods adopted clearly *could* lead to a really useful analysis of decision-making in the final court of appeal.

Mark Benney

Poland: A Crisis for Socialism

MARTIN MYANT *Lawrence & Wishart* £9.95

This book promises much and worthily fails to deliver the goods. I'm still at a loss to know why Poland and Polish events between 1980-81 are a 'crisis for socialism'. They certainly *are* that crisis – but I had trouble seeing why, on the basis of this text. The last few months have seen the publication of several books about recent occurrences in Poland, some of them excellently informative and lively reading, others mere parasitical dross. Myant's contribution is 'worthy' because it performs all that is expected of an academic text in purely technical terms – a thorough account, no gross errors, balanced and aware of all the important episodes in the story. Apart from that it's yet another straightforward narrative of the time between August '80 and December '81, with nothing new to add. There are at least four books working in roughly the same field – MacShane's *Solidarity*, Singer's *The Road to Gdansk*, Ascherson's Penguin text, and Ruane's compilation of BBC Monitoring Service scripts, *The Polish Challenge*. There is even a decent (though occasionally infuriating) left-wing analysis, *Solidarnosc: From Gdansk to Military Repression*, by Barker and Weber. Anyone possessing those already will find Myant's book a waste of £10, since he simply covers the basic story – and that's done extremely well in all those other texts.

There is a real need for something detailed on the PZPR, the Communist Party, and the social structure of contemporary Polish society. There is always room for an exceptional personal account of what it was like to experience these years in Poland. As martial law is still with us, there is space for further analysis of what has yet to happen (which may be far more interesting than what has so far occurred). This book fills no gaps, and occupies valuable market space instead. It fails to scrutinise Solidarity's internal movements, and relies heavily on what has already been published in English already, apart from the few quotes from Polish newspapers.

Gustaw Moszcz

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FICTION
Harriett Gilbert

Under the skin

Private Parts
CHRISTOPHER HOPE *Routledge* £6.95
Constance
LAWRENCE DURRELL *Faber* £7.95
Rogue Justice
GEOFFREY HOUSEHOLD *Michael Joseph* £7.95

Not until the end of **Private Parts** can one fully appreciate the care, the skill, with which these ten short stories were assembled. Most are set in South Africa and the first is a Bunuelesque black comedy which opens with a Boer farmer coming home for a tea prepared by his grandmother. Unexceptionable, you might feel, were it not for the following, passing references to Grannie:

> Her white boots touched the tops of her thighs and zipped up the back . . . As she stooped her blouse opened and he saw her breasts, white and powdered. They seemed to him like rugby balls . . .

The sense of wrongness grows. There is an unexplained visit from a dwarf. The radio transmits heavy breathing. Grannie is discovered without her blouse, giving a history lesson to the farm workers. On the way to its ugly, disturbing climax, the story travels with a nightmare's demented logic. But what other logic could possibly apply, in a land where Grannie can say to her grandson:

> 'It is our duty to explain to the Bantu their place and part in the history of our country . . . We must lead them by the hand, our grasp must be friendly but also firm. They must not be allowed to become cheeky'?

The next few stories use absurdity to the same subversive end, but, as the book progresses, surrealism begins to give way to a more realistic note. Since, however, the dangerous echoes of the earlier stories linger, the reader's nerves stay wide awake to the slightest nuance of lunacy. The effect is insidious and devastating – a total flaying of the rationale with which apartheid is veiled.

Beneath it, there is exposed so monstrous a travesty of reason that anyone (of whatever colour) attempting to live by its rules must themselves become mad in order to feel themselves sane. In two of the later stories, Hope's hero is an orphan. Such an absolute break from the past, he suggests, is the only possible escape – in connection with apartheid, 'reform' is a meaningless concept. Other South African writers have said this, but none with such ferocious humour, creative imagination, or style.

Lawrence Durrell has been credited with all the aforementioned qualities, and **Constance** is on this year's Booker Prize short list. Third in his current quincunx of novels, it begins, in time, where *Livia* ended, at the outbreak of World War Two. Their idyllic summer shattered, Constance, Sam and Aubrey Blanford are blown about a world reverberant with the tread of German jackboots. This is not to say that they, themselves, get a great deal trodden upon – Durrell's characters tend to exist on some static rim of history. Sam enlists in the British army, but Blanford escapes to Cairo with Prince Hassad, Constance to Geneva to practice psychoanalysis.

Thematically, *Constance* pursues Durrell's central concern with the novelist-as-character-as-novelist, bringing Blanford at last together with his literary creation, Rob Sutcliffe. All good mind-stretching stuff – except that (as always with Durrell) the excitement aroused by his literary intentions is disappointed, almost at once, by their facile execution. Not only the central theme of the book, but war, fascism, Freudian psychology, are treated with a singular lack of insight, or judgment.

The number of casual anti-Semitic remarks, for example, would leave even Dorothy Sayers gasping, while the sympathetically-presented sexual theories of Constance's lover, Affad, are unattractive for more than their phallocentricity:

> 'Sperm needs to be cultivated . . . the girl should all the time be making more and more, manipulating the scrotum, caressing it . . . The more they (lovers) render the orgasm conscious the deeper in phase they will be, thus the purer the child and the more harmonious the race.'

There is no denying the richness of Durrell's descriptive writing – it can hurt the salivary glands. But his intellectual engagement with political or psychological theory is (to put it in the kindest light) puerile to adolescent.

Geoffrey Household's *Rogue Male* (about a man on the run for his life, having failed to assassinate Hitler) was one of the finest adventure stories of its time (1939) – as impressive for its artistic integrity as for its story-telling virtues of action, suspense and atmosphere. Since then, Household has written nineteen novels (most of them respectfully received), but not until now has he published a sequel to that first, unequivocal success. **Rogue Justice** is a brave book. Household's hero was, and is, a romantic. He believes in the Individual. He believes in the Power of Love. He also has a strong, if complex, notion of Right and Wrong – none of which sounds quite so convincing, today, as it once perhaps did.

The achievement of *Rogue Justice* is that it does convince – in spite of the quaint formality with which the hero remembers his 'only love'; the killings; the glorification of 'aloneness'. What makes these quite acceptable is that it soon becomes apparent that Household is going to re-examine their basis. As his hero wages his single-handed war against the Nazis, extending his field of vengeance through Poland, Slovakia, Turkey and Greece, there is another, moral adventure taking place in his mind. If, for reasons of nostalgia, this book could never outshine *Rogue Male*, it certainly does not disgrace it. □

THEATRE
Benedict Nightingale

Opium for the people

Poppy
PETER NICHOLS *Barbican*
The Witch of Edmonton
DEKKER, FORD and ROWLEY
Pit

Peter Nichols has, it's true, good reason for complaint. Last year saw the production of his best effort yet, a piece at once emotionally overwhelming and technically innovative, chronicling (as it very precisely did) the mechanics of adultery, the two-way damage inflicted by lies and betrayal, and much more, through the device of bisecting both the husband and wife involved into distinct stage presences: Benjamin Whitrow and Billie Whitelaw representing their outer and visible selves, Anton Rogers and Eileen Atkins their unspoken lusts, insecurities, guilts and dreads. Yet *Passion Play*, as it was called, did not make the promised trip from Aldwych to West End, thanks largely (it seems) to the withdrawal of the star player who was to have substituted for one of the original actors; and Nichols's not-unnatural resentment was only too apparent when he came to receive the best-play award it had earned him. Instead of stroking the assembled egos with the usual grateful platitudes, he delivered himself of a stony homily about the iniquity of actors. It was embarrassing, it was magnificent, it was war.

But Nichols is fighting that war very strangely at present. His military logic seems to have deserted him. In his exasperation at the theatrical profession he has, in effect, turned his guns upon himself and his audiences. He will, he says, write for the stage no more: a decision that even his severer critics will agree to be misguided, misdirected, indeed vandalistic. This column calls a spade a spade, and it doesn't like the implement with which Nichols is busy burying his talent in hopes of discountenancing his enemies; it calls a nose a nose, and it is outraged to see an eminent dramatist cutting off his godgiven smelling system in order to spite his face. Frankly, it thinks Peter has gone a bit bonkers, and would urge him to pull himself together, pick up his quill, and get writing pronto. To that end it has one final and, it thinks, irresistible argument to put: is Nichols really content to leave the theatre on the – and here we come to the point we've been assiduously avoiding – on the sheer disaster of **Poppy?**

Don't be misled by the generally kindly reviews. It was a pretty flat opening at the Barbican, even allowing for the presence of critics and professional first-nighters who would rather die than join in the shouts and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Jane Carr in *Poppy*

choruses demanded by the actors. The idea, you see, is to create an ironically slanted version of the kind of English panto that, as he tells us in a characteristically nostalgic programme note, Nichols enjoyed as a boy. There are comic horses, a chorus of frolicking yokels who change in hue and garb as the action moves further and further into the mysterious East, an Oriental potentate who produces magic bangs and flashes when he's vexed, a leggy and distinctively female principal boy, a tweedy and indisputably male Dame, several anachronistic and seemingly spontaneous jokes about Lord Lucan and the Barbican air conditioning, some suggestive *double-entendre;* and all to inform us about the imperial atrocities inflicted by the drug-toting British upon the Chinese circa 1840. 'Will you promise to tell me if you see anything, boys and girls', a Buttons-figure typically asks us; and, when we do, turns round too late to see the severed heads being brandished over the back-wall. All the familiar conventions are introduced, and many are rendered similarly didactic.

IT DOESN'T really work, though, for two main reasons. One is that the pristine panto has insidiously evolved into a hyped-up musical, which reaches a swinging, stamping, storming climax in a production-number called 'The Blessed Trinity' – meaning the amalgam of civilisation, commerce and Christianity with which we British supposedly confused the Chinese – that is not in the published text at all. It could be claimed that the inordinate acres of the Barbican stage have made a somewhat overblown approach inevitable. It could even be said that Nichols's stage directions at times encourage it, notably in a title-song which calls for actors on trapezes and dancers flying from wires. Not presumptuously, this is transformed into an exotic parody of dream and *Dream,* De Quincey's and Peter Brook's, complete with gigantic poppies, smoke, red light, and floating lovelies in nightshirts. But Terry Hands's direction surely allows the process to go too far. The words are often smothered by the ostentatious verve of Monty Norman's music, and the atmosphere smacks too little of a pastiche *Dick Whittington,* too much of an upmarket *Chu Chin Chow.*

YET NOT even the intimate theatre and production the piece obviously requires would, I think, leave us with an evening in full working order. The second trouble is that the pantomime, especially when the script evokes it with such love and in such detail, isn't a very satisfactory form for airing and exposing our ancestors' attempts to hook a nation on opium by means of bribes, threats and gunboats. Part of the idea presumably is to contrast the gallumphing innocence, callow moral certainties and essential insularity of a *Whittington* with what the real-life mayors, aldermen and city magnates were perpetrating in the name of patriotism and profit; but that doesn't seem to take us far enough to justify parody so pervasive and persistent.

That more than this is meant is apparent from the claim of a spoof Queen Victoria, according to whom anyone who wants to understand her subjects 'could do worse than spend a little time deciphering the British pantomime'. In other words, Nichols is suggesting that there's something in the form which helps explain our national content, something in the panto which illuminates our arrogant, greedy and violent colonial history. But he never really makes that connection, or never makes it on any rational level. You could, I suppose, conclude that what crushed the Chinese were trite rhymes, bathroom jokes, audience participation, humanoid horses and general sexual ambivalence; but that can't be what Nichols intended.

The panto element adds little and, I fear, subtracts much. Without it, perhaps we might have had a more thorough investigation of a part of our collective unconscious we've preferred to keep suppressed. I visualise one of those stage documentaries Peter Cheeseman pioneered in the tatty ex-fleahouse he runs in Stoke-on-Trent: informal, informative, versatile in style, wide-ranging in content, and unafraid of the contradiction and complexity that, surely, Nichols's subject-matter demands. By the standards of 1982, no doubt we British behaved worse to the Chinese than contemporary American mafiosi, who don't actually force the New York municipal authorities to let them continue ruining the city's addicts. But things, not least the danger of the poppy itself, obviously looked very different in 1838. The historians who concluded that the import of dope was only a surface pretext for Chinese hostility to British traders and diplomats can't all be blimps or knaves. After all, even Palmerston was initially willing to stop the trade as part of a settlement. Besides, didn't China have its domestic crop, with which its officials seemed perfectly prepared to poison their own people? But *Poppy,* thanks partly to the intrusion of stereotypes from panto, almost always prefers the pontificating simplification to the inconvenience of qualification.

IT WOULD be excessive to conclude that Nichols is always better when he concentrates on love or marriage, personal relationships or, as in the case of *Forget-Me-Not Lane,* autobiography, than when he dons his prophet's loincloth and starts glumly deploring the state of the nation, past or present. I have to admit, though, that I myself prefer his more private work, such as *Joe Egg, Chez Nous* or *Passion Play,* to his more public, such as *The Freeway* or even *The National Health,* pieces too sketchy and impressionistic altogether to succeed as social summations. Indeed, his more public plays seem to me bearable only when their private parts come plausibly to life, as happens for instance in *Born in the Gardens,* which Nichols clearly intended as a bleak comment on a representative sample of the derelict English, but which I, for one, remember for some splendidly eccentric scenes involving Beryl Reid and Barry Foster, loonie mum and shambling, helpless son respectively. But there is no chance of such rueful humanity in *Poppy,* which is all caricature, moral superiority, showbiz dazzle and loud music. Let me rephrase my opening question. Is Peter Nichols, whom we value for the truth and warmth of his admittedly somewhat pessimistic insights into people, really intending to abandon the theatre on a note like *that?*

THE WEEK has brought a fascinating and finely acted import to the Pit from Stratford in **The Witch of Edmonton**: on the face of it, a sensational tale of devilry and murder punished; underneath, in the crannies of the subtext, a surprisingly sympathetic account of the pressures that cause weak young men to err and poor old women to look to a nether world for help. Gerard Murphy, so widely and unjustly rubbished for his Prince Hal earlier this season, gives a marvellously tense and sweaty performance as a bigamist and wife-killer. □

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

MUSIC
Andrew Clements

Patron saint

Stravinsky: Songs
ENSEMBLE INTERCONTEMPORAIN/BOULEZ
Deutsche Grammophon 2531 377
Stravinsky: Chamber Works
ENSEMBLE INTERCONTEMPORAIN/BOULEZ
Deutsche Grammophon 2531 378
Stravinsky: Selected Correspondence
Volume 1 ed. Robert Craft *Faber* £25

The celebrations for the centenary of this century's greatest composer have been prolonged and joyous, as much a rejoicing in the vitality and diversity of modern music, it has sometimes seemed, as in the extraordinary genius of its patron saint. The record companies, with characteristic lack of enterprise, have by and large confined their recognition of the event to duplicating works already more than adequately recorded, though CBS has produced a handsome edition of all the discs conducted by Stravinsky himself, at an equally handsome price which will ensure it stays beyond the reach of the average record buyer. Deutsche Grammophon's pair of releases originating from IRCAM in Paris are rather more adventurous. Stravinsky's songs with instrumental or orchestral accompaniment may be comfortably accommodated on a single LP; the only omissions here are the very early *Faun and Shepherdess* and those songs with piano that he did not later arrange for larger ensemble. He turned to the medium only sporadically through a long career; there is nothing to represent the three decades of neoclassicism between *Mavra* of 1922 and *The Rake's Progress* of 1951. The range is fascinating however, and the selection contains exquisite pieces.

The settings of Verlaine, Bal'mont and the *Three Japanese Lyrics* are the pick of the first side of the disc, the latter pair of works especially showing the influence of Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* on Stravinsky's ensemble writing and perhaps too on the songs' evanescent textures, their elliptical utterance and ambiguous tonalities. Against them the Russian songs from the same decade (the First World War period) make a savage contrast – coarse-grained, folk inflected – the counterparts on the tiniest scale of *Renard* and *The Soldier's Tale*. The three works from Stravinsky's last period – three Shakespeare songs, *In Memoriam Dylan Thomas* and *Elegy for JFK* are complemented by two arrangements of Wolf songs, the last music Stravinsky wrote, because he 'wanted to say something about death and felt that he couldn't compose anything of his own'. The Thomas and Kennedy memorials are terse and pithy, the *Elegy* (to a text by Auden) lasting only 94 seconds, the setting of Thomas's 'Do Not Go Gentle' austerely blocked in dirge canons for trombones. The items are shared between four singers, all of them English speakers: Phyllis Bryn-Julson, Ann Murray, Robert Tear and John Shirley-Quirk. Miss Bryn-Julson is perfectly suited to the delicate tracery of the Bal'mont and Japanese settings; her cool, elegantly accurate tone becomes another strand in Boulez's precise ordering of the instrumental lines. Elsewhere the other singers are sometimes a little too sober, and Boulez's approach encourages them, consistently favouring accuracy over spontaneity.

In the accompanying instrumental issue also, Boulez and his quickly responsive band produce stunningly accurate playing at the expense of vitality. I confess to finding the neoclassical works that make up the bulk of this selection – the *Ebony Concerto* and *Dumbarton Oaks* – among the more dispensable parts of Stravinsky's enormous output, but such a fine account of the Three Pieces for solo clarinet (1918) and again the three elegiac works that end the disc are essential listening. The *Elégie* for solo viola of 1944 was entirely new to me, written in memory of the founder of the Pro Arte String Quartet, recalling Bach's solo violin works in its predominantly two-part texture. The minute, jewel-like *Epitaphium* and *Double Canon* for string quartet are Stravinsky at his most austere; less than three minutes' music all together but bearing the stamp of greatness in every bar.

IF a complete edition of Stravinsky's music in modern top-class performances will remain a pious hope, an equally comprehensive life and works seems similarly unlikely while much of the primary source material is scattered around the world. Robert Craft has chosen to prepare an edition of the letters as a preliminary to any later biography; the volume issued for the centenary is the first of a projected series of five. In it Craft has concentrated on nine separate correspondences that span virtually the whole of Stravinsky's creative life. The first, to his first wife Catherine, brings the most copious additions to our knowledge of the composer's early years, those to Auden and Cocteau show the incisiveness and precision of his working methods. The portrait of the man they convey is not especially flattering. Up to the Second World War at least, Stravinsky appears ruthlessly ambitious, utterly single minded in his work. A relaxation creeps into his relationship with Auden, which began with *The Rake's Progress* and continued to the composer's death. The book, beautifully produced and edited with enormous thoroughness by Craft, is endlessly fascinating; the harbinger of much more fascination and enlightenment to come. □

NEW STATESMAN INDEX

The index to Vol. 103 (January-June 1982) is now available, price £1.25, post free, from the publisher: 10 Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ.

FOLK
Sam Richards

Sources

English Rock and Roll: The Early Years 1800-1850
THE OYSTER BAND *Pukka Records TOP 01*
Figgy Duff
Dingle's Records DIN 326

The new Oyster Band album is an exercise in taste exactly opposite to mine. The songs are over-arranged, the rock influences are not assimilated – we can hear the joins – and most of the songs are taken too fast. Sparse but effective folk verse is often drowned by a flood of effects. It adds up to music with a split personality, rock music with antiquated lyrics. The album's facetious title sums it up. All this is a sham as the Oyster Band is an excellent *ceilidh* band.

The Figgy Duff album is less heavy handed, although even here I found a couple of the songs overdone to the point of near melodrama. They use amplification, electric bass and drums, but this line-up rarely obliterates the gutsy Newfoundland music of their repertoire.

Newfoundland folksong is mainly a mixture of Irish and West Country English with a dash of Welsh, Scots and French. They play fast over there and, as on the West coast of Ireland, folk revivalists must be able to rise to meet the tradition on its own terms before extending it. Figgy Duff succeeds in this. Their genuine musicality is obvious from the first notes of Side One.

The addition of drums, bass and guitar to the traditional melodeon and mandolin for the most part suits the raw, earthy idiom. The fast jigs and reels really whizz along, and the only serious reservation about the album concerns the recording engineering rather than the group. There's an excess of pop-like presence, most notable in the overdose of echo on Pam Morgan's voice.

That apart, this album, plus the group's visit to England this summer, should establish them as one of the outstanding ensembles on the international folk scene. Their playing feels right; it stems directly from its source, the outport communities of Newfoundland. □

Among this week's contributors:

ANNA COOTE was until recently Deputy Editor of the *NS*. She is co-author, with Beatrix Campbell, of *Sweet Freedom* (Picador).

HARRIETT GILBERT is joint Books Editor of *City Limits*.

HARRY CLIFTON'S new collection, *Comparative Lives*, is published this month by Gallery Books, Dublin.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FILMS
John Coleman

Plugged in

Raggedy Man (AA) *Classics, Shaftesbury Avenue, Tottenham Court Road and Chelsea*
Deathtrap (A) *Warner; Studio; ABCs, Bayswater, Fulham and Edgware Roads*
Author! Author! (A) *Classic, Haymarket; ABC Shaftesbury Avenue; Odeons, Kensington and Swiss Cottage*

Mental health warning: to get the very real benefit from Jack Fisk's **Raggedy Man** try to forget about its pretensions to mystery and suspense, because the identity and functions of that scarred, elusive odd-job man of the title are sappingly predictable from the off. Much of William D. Wittliff's small-town script exhibits an altogether higher order of observation and intelligence, not so incidentally giving Sissy Spacek a part she quite glowingly inhabits. She is restless Nita, divorced with two small sons, stuck out in Gregory, Texas, in 1944 as a switchboard operator, living in the local phone company office and resolved somehow 'to situate myself in a better situation'. Constantly told by her unsympathetic boss that her job is 'frozen', and that there's a war on, she befriends a sailor, Teddy (Eric Roberts), one rain-swept night when he makes a phone call that finds his fiancée has married elsewhere. Teddy takes her kids to a John Wayne movie – 'they're in hog heaven!' she exclaims – and brings her a present: 'Nylons!' Well, raylon, he says, but they're sheer. The Andrews Sisters sing 'Rum and Coca Cola' over the radio, then they dance to a Benny Goodman number before an inevitable shared bed-time.

In the little town a couple of shiftless brothers snicker about Nita, nervously gee each other up to do something about her, see their tentative moves thataway (half-bullying her kids, prowling outside the house) thwarted by the barely glimpsed raggedy man. When it comes to the schlock-horror showdown near the end, corpses and all, behind the box-office nastiness there is still an unusually human incompetence about this pair (excellently played by William Sanderson and Tracey Walter): they're a lot less frightening than your conventional movie rapists. Similarly, the detailed interactions of Nita, her two-day Teddy and the boisterous little boys (Henry Thomas and Carey Hollis Jr) ring uncommon true. 'Cripes!' says Nita as two neighbouring biddies spot her sailor bare-chested on the front porch the morning after. Warned by a sanctimonious old guy that 'it don't look good', she narrows her eyes – 'Why don't you call Mrs Thomson? She's always glad to hear from you about this time of night . . .' The hamlet's secrets are, after all, hers too, as only telephonist, and she swings back at her boss before bussing out at the close. Of *course* she knows there's a war on: who better, as the news of casualties is relayed through her switchboard? If New Zealand's *The Scarecrow*, to which this period-piece is an odd sort of reverse pendant, can be praised for its portrayal of hick manners, then *Raggedy Man* is a raging masterwork. In fact, it is a decent little flawed film, with Spacek roundly holding the centre as a spunky and put-upon young Forties mom, right down to the toe-nails she paints red for her passing fling.

Elsewhere, it's brittle-time on old Broadway. With Sidney Lumet's pretty deft direction of Jay Presson Allen's screen version of Ira Levin's stage play, **Deathtrap,** some feeling of *déjà vu* is inescapable; and not merely because Mr Levin used the main plot twist of *Les Diaboliques* as an opening gambit. As the intrigue pursues its subsequent reversals, to that point of no return where one ceases to give a damn, memories of the serpentine inanities of *Sleuth* are tiresomely revived, with the added spur that Michael Caine is once again in a lead role. And very good he is, too, as the ambiguous top mystery-thriller playwright currently celebrating his fourth flop in a row in the company of a scatty, wealthy and ailing wife (Dyan Cannon) at their huge, largely one-set East Hampton home, one corner of which is devoted to a sinister collection of lethal and antique curios: everything from a crossbow to Houdini's trick handcuffs.

An ex-student of his, clean-cut Christopher Reeve, seems to have written a brilliant first thriller and is invited to visit, complete with the original MS. Cosily resident nearby is a psychic Dutch lady (Irene Worth, having trouble keeping a straight accent), who pops in and out, rightly smelling death on all sides. A heart-attack leaves Reeve installed as Caine's 'secretary', when the cat-and-mouse switches really begin.

Poor Al Pacino shambles, distractedly miscast, through **Author! Author!** as Armenian Ivan, another playwright, fighting to get his second act together as his second wife (Tuesday Weld) walks out of her fourth marriage, leaving him with five variously fathered cute kids, only the tapir-nosed Igor (young-wise Eric Gurry) from his own loins. Pacino charms Dyan Cannon, firing her second and even wackier broadside this week, into his soon-to-open play, which is called 'English With Tears' and incorporates such worryingly-mentioned items as 'the refugee-arrival scene'. (Fugitive scraps indicate an audience-departure scene.) Cannon and Pacino are soon merrily lovers, but an attempted night out with the young 'uns – a Rumanian film, supper at Elaine's – ends with Igor blearily lifting his head from the restaurant table to howl, 'Oh, God, we're still *here*.' Word has it that the film's writer, Israel Horovitz, is a buddy of Mr Pacino's. The truth is that the Horovitz blend of snappy give-'em-the-showbusiness cracks with more heartfelt stuff is probaby unplayable anyway but certainly so with Pacino's Method-'honest' raggedness. It also takes an unconscionable time for Nature's All-Round Dad to twig what a bitch the Weld-character is. Oh, author, author. □

TELEVISION
William Boyd

The Liver Blokes

ALAN Bleasdale's very good play *The Black Stuff* has given birth to five progeny – **The Boys from the Black Stuff** (BBC-2) – the first of which was broadcast last week. The gang of Liverpudlian labourers, who overreached themselves with a bit of unauthorised free-enterprise in the original play, are all back in Liverpool now and on the dole.

Each of the five new plays will concentrate on a particular character. This week it was Chrissie (Michael Angelis), the podgy, soft-hearted one, though, by way of reintroducing us I assume, we saw all the others at various points in the narrative. Chrissie does a bit of work on the side (£14 a day, in his hand) for an unscrupulous Irish builder, but what he's really after is a proper job. However, times being what they are, he has to make the best of things and so he rounds up his team and sets to work renovating a building.

He is being snooped on, though, by the DHSS 'sniffers', who suspect him of moonlighting and who follow him around Liverpool as he collects his squad, waiting for the moment to pounce. Included in the group are Loggo (Alan Igbon) – one of the original 'boys' – a wisecracking dandy, and Snowy, a member of the WRP. Snowy (Chris Darwin) is so jumpy that he comes to his jobs equipped with lengths of rope which he hangs from various windows just in case he has to make a sudden exit. Much of the humour of the play came in the form of banter between the radical Snowy and the less politically committed members of Chrissie's squad. It was a fairly obvious device (Snowy could legitimately voice all the Marxist and socialist arguments against Tory capitalism) but it was handled with tact and wit. Instead of having the others nod their agreement, Bleasdale made it plain that the other men regarded Snowy as something of a nut. The validity of the points being made was something established by the viewer: nothing was forced or remotely loaded, yet all the same the implications – Bleasdale's point of view – were inescapable.

This evenhandedness made itself particularly evident in the treatment of Liverpool's notorious police force. Chrissie calls on one mate, to see if he's interested in a spot of work, only to find that the man's son has been worked over in the police cells the night before. Yet the one policeman we encounter in the play isn't an ogre. He happily books the sniffers for a traffic offence and later, when Snowy calls him a bastard, simply dubs him 'midget' in return. The exception that proves the rule? Perhaps; but Bleasdale's subtly partisan approach was far

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

more convincing, and would gain more adherents, than simple tub-thumping. Anybody, after all, can preach to the converted. It's the waverers and non-committed you have to enlist.

His judiciousness disappeared at the play's conclusion however. The building site is raided by the sniffers and the workers all try desperately to escape. Snowy, trapped on the top floor where he'd been plastering, hurriedly attempts to abseil down one of his escape ropes. The rope breaks and Snowy falls to his death. This was horrifically and gruesomely done, stopping the chase in its tracks as everyone gathers round Snowy's broken body. Everyone is shocked and appalled, but not the DHSS sniffers who here revert to type: robotic and heartless servants of state bureaucracy. As Snowy's blood trickles through the dust they don't send for an ambulance. Instead they start issuing official cautions. Is that really how people would react in those circumstances? For once the rhetoric shouldered out the playwright's craft and skill. But it was the only real lapse in an excellent play.

Some more high standards are being marred in **Smiley's People** (BBC-2) and again the responsibility must be laid at the writer's door—or writers' doors in this case. The script is distinctly uneven and patchy. Episode four was beautifully shot with some marvellous set pieces: the discovery of Otto Leipzig's body; Smiley in the anarchic gypsy camp; even the tiny vignette of Claus Kretzschmar's bar-b-q party, all crass German affluence. A great deal of thought has clearly gone into the whole enterprise and each scene has its small rewards and riches. But when they start speaking to each other . . . Episode four wasn't too bad because a lot of it – surprisingly for Le Carré (or Lee Carr as he's known in the States) – was action. Such conversation as existed took place between Smiley and various foreigners and was typical of the slightly mannered exchanges that such encounters give rise to. But nothing changed when Smiley started talking to fellow nationals: it seemed just as odd, just as artificial.

This reservation has been with me from the series' outset but it wasn't until the two types of dialogue were juxtaposed that I became fully aware of what was wrong. People seem to be talking in a very self-conscious way. This was particularly true in the scenes between Smiley and Guillam (Michael Byrne): they also nattered on about old times in the service in the presence of a third party, but that's another matter.) Smiley: 'Is Stango still your clerk?' Guillam: 'Since you ask.' What does this mean? Guillam: 'You know what you said to me once?' Smiley: 'Remind me.' There's been a lot of reminding going on in this series. Also, Smiley's inclined to come out with statements like: 'All I'm left with is me and thirty years of the cold war without the option.' Which, when spoken in Guinness's sonorous tones, begins to sound dangerously melodramatic. Compared with *Tinker, Tailor, Smiley's People* does seem more verbose. Keep it laconic would seem to be the best answer: the more we're in the dark the better we like it. It might not be compulsive listening but it's certainly compulsive viewing.

More verbosity on **Omnibus** (BBC-1) in Barry Norman's whizz through the chic designers of Milan. It's not Norman's commentary that was to blame – straightforward enough – but the hot air spoken by and about the designers. The worst of the experts wheeled on to enlighten us were the Emmanuels (they of the wedding dress: unfortunately for us some people have greatness thrust upon them). Trying to explain what is so wonderful about the clothes of Giorgio Armani we got: 'If a man's wearing an Armani suit he just looks good.' And profounder still: 'It's the cut of his clothes. The cut of his clothes is superb.' I see. Only an expert could come up with insights like that. □

WEEKEND COMPETITION

No 2741 Set by M. K. Cheeseman

Never mind about Lord Lundy – let's have Bellocian verses about Lord Gormley, Lord Denning, Lord Shinwell or any other contemporary Lord of your choice. Up to 14 lines, by 29 October: oh, and bear in mind that even the comp is subject to the laws of libel.

No 2738 Set by E. O. Parrott

Accounts of the visit of the Pooters to the Macbeths, the Bracknells to the Oedipuses, or similar.

Report By Toby Jugge

The *joie de vivre* which has reigned in the Complex since She disappeared to Vanuatu was heightened by the splendidly incongruous juxtapositions produced for this comp. Some of you muffed it, to be sure; and George Cowley sent in an entry so filthy that we have passed it on to the Obscene Publications Squad. But many of you shone. A Nightingale for each winner.

Holmes and Watson meet the Three Sisters

'Boredom can seriously damage your health', remarked Holmes, as we sat in the garden of the Prozorovs' house. The weekend had been taken up with idle talk, endless eating and drinking, and constant complaints by Prozorov's three sisters that they were never likely to see Moscow. It therefore came as a considerable relief to hear that Baron Tuzenbach had been killed in a duel.

'By Captain Soliony, I presume,' I observed.

'Presume nothing of the kind, Watson. Where was Irina when the Baron died?'

'Good heavens, Holmes!' I gasped. 'You are not suggesting that she – !'

'She had the best motive of all – he wanted to marry her. What a fate awaited her! He would have bored her to death.'

NAOMI MARKS

The Famous Five take tea with Gaius Caesar Augustus Germanicus and family

'I say,' said Dick when the Emperor went out to fetch some more pop, 'I think he's beastly, don't you?'

'Rather,' said Anne. 'He's had twice as many buns as anyone else. And what a jolly rotten way to treat a sister in company! I'm glad you're not like that, Julian.'

'So am I', said Julian with a puzzled look.

'Gosh,' laughed George. 'His uncle's jolly funny, though. Fancy talking like that all the t-t-t-time!' The children were all enjoying a good laugh when Caligula returned and ripped Timmy's leg off so he could stir his drink.

'That's almost as bad as the buns!' gasped Anne.

'What say we get him back for it?' said Julian grimly.

N. J. WARBURTON

The Pooters at Wuthering Heights

8 August. I fear we have been misled about the sea-view. Carrie was standing on a chair by the window trying to catch a glimpse of the beach, when, without knocking, our landlord entered the room. 'That was *her* seat. You'll not stand on it,' he said in an unnecessarily loud voice, and without ceremony lifted Carrie bodily from the chair and deposited her on the floor. Dear Carrie quite rightly reminded him that she was a married woman, whereupon Mr Heathcliff simply glared at her. I decided not to reprimand him too severely on our first day, so, contenting myself with a 'tut-tut' and a withering look, returned to the unpacking.

It was all, as Carrie remarked, rather surprising.

GERARD BENSON

'Crossroads' visits 'The Borgias'

Benny: Ooo, Miss Luke! I do be seein' a cardinal sodomising a serving wench!

Miss Luke: Oh come on Benny, don't make a fuss. I'm always telling you folk are different in Italy. Let's go and see if we can get a cup of tea.

Cut to Cardinal's palace

Cesare Borgia: Whatta do you meana I 'ave to sleep in Chalet Nine? What about my six concubines and four catamites?

Miss Diane: Sorry sir, but it's fire regulations. Would you like to speak to Mrs Mortimer?

Cut to garage

Sharon (filing her nails): . . . so I said, you and me are in the same quattrocento, lover boy, you can give me all the bull you like and I go a bundle on your arras. Ooo, I love those Eyties—all flashing eyes and come-to-the-loggia.

Enter Mr Hunter

Mr Hunter: They seem to have poisoned the prompt-girl!

NICHOLAS MURRAY

The Macbeths visit the Pooters

We entertained the Macbeths for supper. I confess to some misgivings, but my son Lupin assured me they were 'bally good company' and my good nature had the better of me again. Carrie became foolishly excited beforehand, but 'carried' it off famously, as I joked afterwards. Mr Macbeth looked at me strangely when I addressed him, with perfect propriety, as 'Your Thaneship', but nothing else untoward happened until he suddenly said the most extraordinary thing, viz: 'Is this a dagger which I see before me?' and something about the handle. I remarked urbanely that one couldn't find servants who understood cutlery nowadays, and the incident passed, but his wife was clearly embarrassed, especially when he started shouting at an empty chair . . .

PETER NORMAN

If you wish to keep your
NEW STATESMAN
in good condition you should use a binder. It holds a half-year's copies and costs only £4.50 (£8.50 for two). Please send remittance to:
NEW STATESMAN
10 Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TAKING PART

John McVicar

The pseudo-art film

THERE IS A CROP of films now on release – *Blade Runner*, *The Thing*, *Poltergeist* – which put the emotions in orbit but leave the mind leaning against the gantry. These 'special effects' movies call up powerful emotions which don't square at all with dramatic content – dialogue is often good but character development is usually disjointed and plots unrealistic. Like chemical foods trick the palate, these 'special effect' movies fool the sensibilities.

But then so do lots of other things. What makes cinema and TV special, though, is that they are the media which are closest to real life; so they feed in models and images for living which are just as influential as the direct experience. This is why the more TV and cinema a person watches the more sentimental and insensitive he or she becomes.

Last week, disgusted at all my emotional pollution, I gave up Hollywood movies and went straight into arty ones. It was just like when I discovered the intestinal evils of bleached fibreless bread and, overnight, switched from sliced to wholemeal. No granary half-measures for me. It was the same with my new health film diet – one day *Conan the Barbarian*, the next *Another Way*!

Another Way won the International Critics' Award at this year's Cannes film festival and our critics haven't exactly been stinting in their praise either: 'Supreme craftsmanship . . . one of the cinema's most truly erotic films' (*The Times*); 'Bold, eloquent and erotic' (*Observer*); 'Accomplished and daring' (*Guardian*); though our own John Coleman (*NS* 1 October) was less impressed.

Directed by Karoly Makk, *Another Way* is a Hungarian film which one critic said probes 'the interface of professional and sexual integrity'. Set two years after the '56 Hungarian uprising, the film focuses on two female journalists who, while working for a prestigious periodical, have a homosexual affair.

Butch Eva is taken on by the editor even though she has a record of challenging censorship and placed in the same office as femme Livia. Almost immediately the dark, short-haired, flat-shoed, sensibly clothed Eva (she's the masculine one) is making overtures to blonde, frivolously dressed, glamorous Livia (she's the feminine one). Livia is married to an army officer but is alienated from him and bored. She is flattered and intrigued by Eva's attentions and, after flirting with other men in classic sexist style, allows Eva to seduce her.

Livia is shown as a hack uninterested in what she writes, while Eva is passionately committed to telling the truth about the brutalities of the collectivisation of agriculture and the suppression of the uprising. The one story she files is on an agricultural co-operative which, although peripheral to the plot, does provide the most powerful sequence in the film. All the ugly, patriarchal, drunken sentimentality of the peasant co-operative is forcefully captured in Makk's coverage of their harvest celebration and feast. Yet, the power of this scene is not harnessed to develop the political themes of the film's plot. Instead, we are regaled with pretentious, wooden confrontations between Eva and her editor over *her* story, which culminate finally in *his* great revelation to her that *he* has learnt when to open his mouth and when to shut it!

Eva resigns her job and returns to her village. There Livia tracks her down and the affair is consummated. Eventually Livia's husband challenges her about Eva and she tells him that she can't stand him touching her and is going to leave him for Eva. The provocative manner of her telling him – she is naked in the bath – doesn't lie easy with her recently discovered passion for Eva. He takes his army revolver and shoots her in the neck, paralysing her.

Eva rushes to her bedside only to be spurned by the penitent Livia who blames Eva for the loss of her imprisoned husband and her paralysis. Her coldness and rejection of Eva are completely at odds with the emotional flow which existed between the two prior to the shooting. Eva, then, makes a suicidal dash for the border where she courts her own death at the hands of the border guards.

THE STORY is told in flashback and one of the opening scenes shows Livia lying on a hospital bed. The scene is the first strong clue to the artistic quality of the film. Three nurses give her a bed bath and you *know* that she will be undressed for the camera. There is a voyeuristic feel to the scene which is confirmed by the way the sponge virtually caresses one of Livia's breasts. The 'Peeping Tom' feel is reinforced by Makk's shooting the scene from an angle that makes the arms of the nurse appear to be the frame. The effect is like looking through a peephole.

Any doubts about Makk's approach are completely dispelled as the camera tracks to the bottom of the bed and shows Livia naked except for the big plaster cast round her neck. Livia's left leg is straight out but her right leg is decorously bent so that her vagina is coyly hidden. This is a woman who has just been paralysed! No film could be redeemed after an early scene like this and *Another Way* isn't.

Another Way is full of scenes like this which show the hand of a limited, voyeuristic director concerned to make an arty film. His concern for his purpose masks his voyeurism, so even in the love scenes there is no gratuitous porn, but the salaciousness is there. It's not an authentic, deep film on either the sexual level or the political. Yet the critics have raved about it. Why? Well, it's Eastern European which is trendy at the moment; it attacks socialist repression without invoking capitalism; and it looks at lesbianism without being sexploitive.

Maybe I should stick to *Rocky III*. □

CLASSIFIED ADS

Phone: 01-405 4911/2/3
Deadline for ads – Normally noon Tuesdays for publication on Fridays

Rates **Lineage:** £1.60 per 6 words (min. 12 words – £3.20). First two words automatically bold, further bold words cost 30p each.
Box number service – U.K. £2 per insertion. Overseas £4 per insertion.
Display: £7 per single centimetre (min. 3 s.c.c. – £21). **Special rate for charities** – £6 per s.c.c. (min. 3 s.c.c. – £18).
Generous discounts for a series of ads are available. Ring for a quotation.

All private ads must be prepaid. Post to:
CLASSIFIED DEPT., THE NEW STATESMAN, 10 GREAT TURNSTILE, LONDON WC1V 7HJ.
Telex – 28449.
To reply to a Box, write to Box No. . . . at the above address.

Holidays/Travel

MOSCOW By TRAIN 3-13 Nov, 22 Dec-1 Jan..... £165
KIEV By TRAIN 3-13 Nov, 22 Dec-1 Jan £155
TASHKENT, SAMARKAND By TRAIN, 18 Dec-3 Jan £200
INCLUDES 5 days with full board and full sightseeing programme
YORKSHIRE TOURS
49 Thornton Lodge Road, Huddersfield HD1 3JQ
Telephone: 0484 24269

AIR TRAVEL PLAN provides you with the cheapest fare to most cities in Europe and Worldwide. Tel. 01-734 3551.

JOURNEY LATIN AMERICA. Low cost flights, holiday journeys. 3-6 weeks. JLA, 10 Barleymow Passage, London W4. 01-747 3108.

RESEARCHER WANTS to contact Britons who have been in trouble abroad. Was your Consulate helpful? 5 Duncan Terrace, N1.

VISITING CAMBRIDGE? Modernised country cottage in area. Sleeps 5. Ideal winter breaks, weekends. From £39 weekly. 01-542 2219.

Publications

ASIA & AFRICA. Catalogues issued. A. C. Hall, 30 Staines Road, Twickenham, Middx.

REVIEW COPIES and other books in fine condition bought and sold by Vermilion Books, 57 Red Lion Street, London WC1. Tel: 01-242 5822.

Financial

IMMEDIATE ADVANCES £100-£25,000. Written terms on request. Regional Trust Ltd, 31 Dover Street, London W1A 4RT. 01-491 2934.

SALARIED PERSONS Postal Loans Ltd. Loans from £50. 175 Regent Street, W1. For written quote apply: Tel. 01-734 1974.

Insurance

INSURANCE ADVICE. Any type. Half commission to your charity/organisation, etc. Redcliffe Brunel, 205 Avonmouth Road, Bristol BS11 9EG. 0272 (STD) 827575/6.

Removals

GENTLE GHOST
REMOVALS COOPERATIVE
Fast, cheap and reliable
All sizes
01-603 2865
27 Royal Crescent Mews London W11

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Personal

ALONE? Friendship or marriage for all ages and in all areas. 'Status', 7 Oxford Circus Avenue, London W1. 01-439 1619.

ARE YOU a lively minded individual, aged 18-80, enjoying the arts, discussions, conferences, communications, rambles, dancing? The Progressive League caters for Mind, Body and Intellectual Stimulus. And it's so cheap. Ring 01-452 8358.

ARE YOU SEEKING occultists, witches, communes, companions etc? Pen-friends in all areas and throughout USA/worldwide. Stamp to: Baraka Aegis, The Golden Wheel, Liverpool L15 3HT.

ARE YOU an academic or univ. grad., female, 28-35, single, interested in the intellect and the arts? Would you like to correspond with me? I share your interests. Box 4771.

ARTIST'S WIDOW, mid 40s, seeks lover of art, music, etc. to share. Box 4943.

ATTRACTIVE 26-year-old woman with literary and cultural interests, seeks liaison with man (25-35) living in Edinburgh area. Box 4911.

CONVENIENCE MARRIAGE. If you are an academic professional Englishman, over 36, and would like a short marriage with a female counterpart, please write. Confidentiality assured. Phone essential. Box 4921.

CULTURED, INTELLIGENT artistic lady seeks gentleman of refinement for happy permanent relationship. Box 4931.

DATELINE'S PSYCHOLOGICALLY accurate introductions lead to pleasant friendships, spontaneous affairs and firm, lasting relationships including marriage. All ages, all areas. Free details: Dateline Computer Dating Dept. (NT), 23 Abingdon Rd, London W8. Tel. 01-938 1011.

DRISCOLL HOUSE, 200 single rooms, p.b. £40 p.w. 172 New Kent Rd, London SE1. 01-703 4175.

EXPERIENCED, CARING PSYCHOTHERAPISTS. 01-794 6810, 01-586 4109, 01-883 5418.

EXTRA FINE SAVINGS on Durex! Plus the assurance of Family Planning Association. £1 and £2 Variety Samplers; 60 Gossamer £6.50; 60 Forget-me-Not (FPS own brand) £5; 60 new Fetherlite Extra Fine £7. Other offers and free "Expert's guide" with first order. Depts. NSN31, F.P. Sales Ltd., 28 Kelburne Road, Oxford OX4 3SZ.

IF THERE IS a capable woman graduate who can put concern for the problems around us before self-interest and would like to meet a 49-year-old lecturer, trying to do the same while offering stability and fulfilment, please contact Box 4897.

INDIAN PROFESSIONAL woman, 42, looks younger, socialist, seeks man for caring, sharing and lasting relationship. NW area. Box 4935.

ITALY. FREE accommodation offered, farm near Assisi, November to March, in return looking after house while owner absent. Box 4922.

LONDONER (m. 45) seeks sensitive, sensuous partner for civilised leisure and human pleasures. Box 4924.

LOTS OF AFFECTION still in this attractive (erstwhile!) over 60-year-old, grey-haired London lady. Politics, people, music, reading and walking are amongst the interests that abound. Box 4942.

MALE TEACHER, 39, seeks attractive, cultured lady in 20s, 30s. South Wales. Box 4920.

MALE, 28, slightly handicapped spinal curvature. Wide interests, seeks female Southern area. Box 4912.

MAN, 35, North London, divorced, likes books, running, theatre and so on, would like to meet compatible slim woman. Box 4941.

NON-SEXIST non-practising Jewish male, 53, 5ft 4in, divorced, enjoys country walks, dancing, conversation. Seeks non smoking female to share mutual interests, London area. Box 4913.

PERSONALISED CARTOONS. Original Christmas/birthday presents. Details and samples etc: Cartooncraft, Lilac Cottage, East Hanney, Wantage, Oxon.

PIANO TUNER, reliable, North London only unless repairs needed. Denys Parsons MSc, 01-340 4695.

READING, BERKS. Not very masculine male, 34, seeks not very feminine female, 18-45, view lesbian-like relationship. Coitus possible but not essential. Box 4915.

SOCIALLY-AWARE student, 2 children, seeks professional man early thirties, marriage, London. Box 4910.

SUNDANCE KID. Handsome virile male, blond, blue eyes. Interests music, travel. Seeks similar female 20-40 years. Box 4937.

THINK TANK: A non-partisan current affairs, research and discussion club. Details: Box 1584, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 2Z6, Canada.

WARM INTELLIGENT LADY, I long for someone to care for me as much as I could care for them. Mid-forties, slim, naturally fair, educated and genuine. Interested in art, good conversation, travelling, wine, etc. No ties and London based. Looking for professional/business man to share my life. Box 4914.

WIDOWER (50s), caring person, reasonable appearance, seeks friendship with lady (20s/30s). Ints: Literature, travel. Box 4866.

WRITE FOR Money – with Wordsmith, the new writer's newsletter. Details: Wordsmith, Dept W1, 151 Harefields, Oxford.

SCREEN
is now a bi-monthly with a new, more accessible approach. Latest bumper double issue on
SEX & SPECTATORSHIP
available from
29 Old Compton Street
London W1V 5PL
at £3.50 + 60p p & p.

Appointments Wanted

CAMBRIDGE POLITICAL science graduate (24), seeks interesting work, political orientation. Anything considered. Box 4901.

SENIOR CITIZEN, male graduate, seeks 5-10 hours employment weekly in London area. Translating from German, French, Hebrew, Italian and Spanish; book-keeping, typing, interviewing (former CAB voluntary worker). Box 4885.

Secretarial

FAST, ACCURATE typing, IBM Golfball, MSS, theses, etc. Tel: 01-673 7042.

QUALITY typing. English, German, French. Moderate charges. Anne Shotts: 01-452 6617.

Accommodation Vacant

NW LONDON. Large sunny room in flat. Excellent transport. C.h., c.h.w. Parking. £33 p.w. inc. 01-452 2330.

PUTNEY. FURNISHED flat for couple for one year. £50 p.w. 01-789 6030.

ROOM AVAILABLE in shared Hackney house. £17 p.w. plus bills. 01-249 4803.

Exchange

MONTREAL, CANADA. Fully equipped modern home, two bedrooms, study, living room, kitchen, basement recreation room, attached garage. Thirty minutes central Montreal and McGill University. London area preferred. During 1983 choice of time can be arranged. Box 4927.

Meetings

CENTRAL LONDON Fabian Society. Austin Mitchell MP on 'Electoral Reform'. Wed. 20 Oct. 7.30 p.m. 11 Dartmouth Street, SW1.

ICA EVENTS, THE MALL, LONDON SW1. 01-930 3647. PHILOSOPHY IN ACTION Tues. 19 Oct. 7.30 Philosophy and the Real World with Amartya Sen (Prof. Political Economy) and G. A. Cohen (UCL) discuss the problems in the 'real world' philosophy can usefully confront. IN CONVERSATION Wed. 20 Oct. 7.00 P. D. JAMES with H. R. F. KEATING, plus Thurs. 21 Oct. 7.00 MISCHIEF MAKERS: NOVELISTS v SCRIPTWRITERS with William Boyd, Kazuo Ishiguru, Robert McCrum and Emma Tennant. Chair: Walter Donohue. **All tickets £1.25 bookable** (ICA Day Pass 40p)

THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for free pamphlets, book list, programme of activities. Public Talk, Sunday 17 Oct. 8 p.m. 'God or Law' – ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL.

Courses

SCHOOL OF HYPNOSIS enrolling for Spring Term (weekends) London. Tel. 01-226 6963.

THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF FLORENCE

offers a variety of courses in a splendid Florentine environment. Courses in the Italian language (all levels) and the Italian Renaissance throughout the year. Drawing courses in September, October, March and April. G.C.E. A-level Italian from January-June. Accommodation arranged. 1983 brochure now available. Please contact:

David Rundle, The Director
The British Institute
Lungarno Guicciardini 9
Florence
Tel: 010-39 55 284 031

LISTINGS

Social/Cultural
Radical/Arts
Political

15-23 October

SEND DETAILS to: NS FREE LISTINGS at least 7 days in advance

FRI 15 OCT

KENDAL. Norman Hogg speaks. 7.30 p.m. Kirkland Hall, Kendal LP. **0539 24657.**

GREAT YARMOUTH. 'No More Nuclear Power?' ANC fringe meeting at SDP Conference. **0742 754081.**

LONDON, EC4. Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom. An evening of food and entertainment in aid of appeal. 7 p.m.-midnight, at the Ludgate Cellars, Apothecary St. Tickets £5, from CPBF, 9 Poland St, London W1. **Tel: 01-437 2795.**

LONDON WC1. Book Bargains galore at British Humanist Assoc. Giant Book Sale. 11-5 p.m. Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq.

SAT 16 OCT

MANCHESTER. CHAR general meeting, 'Local Housing Policies for Single People: The CHAR Blueprint'. 11 a.m. UMIST. **01-839 6185.**

SWANSEA. Labour Party Day-school. New initiatives in Public Ownership and Workers' Control. Speakers: Bernard Dix (NUPE), Geoff Edge (West Mids. CC), Stephen Bodington (IWC). AUEW House, Orchard St, Swansea. **0792 468934.**

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE. 'Labour & the New Politics: Where next?' Speaker Bea Campbell. 1.30pm. Friends' Meeting House, Jesmond Rd. **0632 327955.**

LONDON NW2. New Variety from CAST, at 'The Cricklewood' pub, Cricklewood Bdy. 8.30pm. £2 (£1 u/w). **01-407 3440.**

BIRMINGHAM. Dayschool on 'The Press' and alternatives. 12 noon. £1.50 (75p u/w). Contact Gary Wiltshire/Stuart Daniels. **021-440 4026.**

SWANSEA. Swansea LP Dayschool – 'Public Ownership & Workers Control'. Spkrs incl. Bernard Dix, Geoff Edge, Stephen Bodington. 10 a.m. AUEW House, Orchard St. **0792-468934.**

SUN 17 OCT

LONDON SE1. London Co-op Political Cttee. annual conference. 10.30-5. County Hall. Registration 50p to Political Committee, CRS London Region, 54 Maryland St., London E15.

CROYDON. Entertainment-cabaret, comedy and music in the Allsorts series. 7.30pm. £1.50 (£1 u/w). Croydon Warehouse Theatre, 62 Dingwall Rd. **01-680 4060.**

ABERDEEN. Beatrix Campbell, 'Wanted: A New Deal For Women'. 7.30 p.m. Aberdeen Univ Union, Upper Kirkgate.

MON 18 OCT

LONDON N1. Prevs. 'A week's a long time in politics.' by Spoiled Ballot Paper. 8 p.m. Old Red Lion pub, Upper St. **01-837 7816.**

TUES 19 OCT

LONDON SW1. Philosophy In Action Series – 'Philosophy and the Real World'. Profs. Amartya sen and G. A. Cohen. 7.30 p.m. £1.25. ICA, The Mall. **01-930 3647.**

LONDON N1. Islington Fabians. 'Building a Mass Party' – Charles Clarke. 8 p.m. Islington Town Hall.

WED 20 OCT

LONDON SW1. P. D. James discusses her new book 'The Skull Beneath the Skin' witth J. R. F. Keating. £1.25. 1 p.m. ICA, The Mall. **01-930 3647.**

CAMBRIDGE. Radical film – 'Cantate de Chile'. 6.30 p.m. £1 (50p u/w). Cambridge College of Arts and Technology, Collier Road.

THURS 21 OCT

LONDON WC1. Seminar – 'Will local democracy survive?' Bernard Crick, Bill Hampton, Alan Alexander. 6.30 p.m. Chancellors Hall, Senate House, University of London, Malet St. **01-636 8000 ext. 3850.**

LONDON SW1. 'Mischief Makers – Novelists v Scriptwriters?' 4 writers discuss with Walter Donohue. 1 p.m. £1.25. ICA, The Mall. **01-930 3647.**

FRI 22 OCT

DARLINGTON. Peace Action entertainment evening, theatre and dance. 8 p.m. £1 (75p u/w). Darlington Arts Centre. **0325-65556.**

LONDON N1. Conference – 'Welfare Pluralism and Community Control'. 10-4.30. Nat. Children's Bureau, 8 Wakely Street. Details ARVAC. **0206-22 5344.**

LONDON WC1. Concert for Chile. 'Animal Magic' and 'Jazira'. £3.50 (£2 u/w). 7 p.m. Camden Centre, Bidborough Street. **01-837 7561.**

SAT 23 OCT

LONDON NW2. New Variety from CAST, inc. Attila the Stockbroker, at 'The Cricklewood' pub, Cricklewood Bdy. 8.30 p.m. £2 (£1 u/w). **01-407 3440.**

ILFORD. Radical book sale at South Essex Bookshop, 335 Ley St. Big reductions. **01-478 2948.**

LIVERPOOL 1. Conference – 'Women and Southern Africa'. 10 a.m. Friends' Meeting House, 65 Paradise Street. Contact – Trades Council, 70 Victoria Street.

LONDON SE1. Campaign Against Racist Laws – action conference. 10-4.30. County Hall. Details – CARL, 56 Edithna Street, London, SW9. **01-733 8508.**

LONDON SE1. London Labour Movement Conference on Esperanto. 11-4 County Hall.

GLASGOW. Scottish Council of Liberation – Middle East Day Conference. 10-4.30. Sloan's Restaurant, Argyle Arcade. Reg. details – Alan Laing. **041-339 9390.**

OXFORD. Seminar, 'Co-operatives and Economic Planning'. 10 a.m. Co-op Hall, 196 Cowley Rd.

FORTHCOMING

24 OCTOBER. LONDON, WC1. Forum, 'Is the Law and Order Debate Genuine?' Andy Erlain, 3 p.m. Library, Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Square.

29-31 OCTOBER, LONDON, E1. The Moving Left Show. Over 50 sessions on wide range of Left topics plus evening music, theatre, comedy. Queen Mary College, Mile End. Info & Free programme. Jo Newman, 16 St John Street, EC1. **01-251 4406.**

30 OCTOBER. WEMBLEY. International Conference on Active Birth. Details: Active Birth Movement, 32 Cholmeley Crescent, London N6 5JR. Tel: **01-348 4636.**

31 OCTOBER. LONDON, W1. Chile Solidarity Campaign presents Inti-Illimani and Paco Pena in concert. 7 p.m. Dominion Theatre, Tottenham Ct. Rd. Box Office. **01-580 9562.**

1 NOVEMBER. MIAMI, FLORIDA. Deadline for Papers and Registrations for 'Faculty (Staff) Development and Evaluation – 2nd International Seminar', 29/12/82-5/1/83. Details: Chris de Winter Hebron, Humanities Faculty, Newcastle Polytechnic. **0632 612181.**

2 NOVEMBER. LONDON, WC1. Kirsten Sonstegard on 'Psychodrama'. 7.30 p.m. Community Rooms, 26 Millman St.

4 NOVEMBER. MANCHESTER. Meeting, 'The Politics of the Peace Movement', Man. Socialist Soc. 8 p.m. Black Lion Hotel, Blackfriars St., Salford. **061-224 5378/4339.**

5 NOVEMBER. LEICESTER. Poetry Reading inc. Michele Roberts. 7.30 p.m. Blackthorn Books, High St.

5-6 NOVEMBER, LONDON WC1. Fifth Socialist Book Fair. Complete display of socialist, radical and trade union literature. (Details of stands, etc. Tel: Bookmarks 01-802 6145.) Camden Town Hall, Euston Road.

5-9 NOVEMBER, SHEFFIELD. History Workshop 16. Subjects inc. Sexual Politics, the State, Peace Movements, People's History. Speakers – Raphael Samuel, Sheila Rowbotham, Royden Harrison, Anna Davin. Sheffield City Poly, Pond St. site. **0742 615388.**

6 NOVEMBER, LONDON SW1. 'Stop Sizewell B' Rally and conference. Speakers – David Ennals MP, Arthur Scargill, Ken Cameron, Colin Sweet, Dr Don Arnott. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Central Hall, Westminster. **0742-754691.**

6 NOVEMBER. MANCHESTER 20. The Peace Movement in 1982–Alternative Production. 10 a.m. £2 (50p u/w). Withington Adult Educ. Centre, Maudeth Rd. **061-861 9205.**

29 NOVEMBER. LONDON, EC2. MIND Conference on the Mental Health (Amendment) Act, 1982. Spkrs. inc. Prof R. Bluglass, Prof R. Olsen, Prof J. Gunn, Bernard Kat, Seamus Killen, Larry Gostin. Barbican Centre. Registration £30 by 8 Nov. to Conference Secretary, MIND, 22 Harley St., London, W1. **01-637 0741.**

CLOSING 1 NOVEMBER COVENTRY, entry for International Rhyme Revival Poetry and Verse Competition. Rhyming verse wanted. £1,000 in prizes. Details – Coventry Chamber of Commerce, 123 St Nicholas Street, Coventry CV1 4FD. **0203 51777.**

Sorry, but we can't accept entries over the phone. Entries must be received by Friday preceding issue date. We reserve the right to exclude items without giving reasons and are not responsible for errors. Space is strictly limited so if you definitely want your item to appear, we suggest you book it as an ad. under the appropriate classified heading. See main heading for rates, etc.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SALE ELECTRONIC GAMES

NOW £40 OFF

ATARI T.V. GAME

THE GAME WITH 50 CARTRIDGES

R.R.P. £129.95 (inc. VAT)

OUR PRICE

£78.22 + VAT

(= £89.95 inc. VAT)

The Atari is supplied with a free mains adaptor, a pair of paddles, a pair of joysticks and a combat cartridge and is the most popular television game on the market and has a range of over 40 different cartridges. In addition to the standard Atari range we also now stock the new Activision cartridges which are currently on special offer reduced from £18.95 to **£16.95 inc. VAT**

ATARI CARTRIDGES

20% OFF R.R.P.

Atari Soccer £29.95
NOW £23.95

Activision Dragster £18.95
NOW £14.95

Activision Boxing £18.95
NOW £14.95

ATARI OWNERS CLUB – Why not join our *FREE* Silica Atari Owners Club and receive our bi-monthly newsletter with special offers and details of the latest new cartridge releases. Telephone us with your name and address and we will add your name to our computer mailing list.

NOW £50 OFF

MATTEL INTELLIVISION

THE ULTIMATE T.V. GAME

R.R.P. £229.95 (inc. VAT)

OUR PRICE

£156.48 + VAT

(£179.95 inc. VAT)

6 NEW CARTRIDGES JUST RELEASED:
ASTROSMASH ★ SNAFU ★ BOWLING
SPACE ARMADA ★ BOXING
TRIPLE ACTION

All 19 current cartridges + the six new ones above now retail at £19.95 — **Silica special offer price £17.95 inc VAT**

The Mattel Intellivision is the most advanced TV game in the world with a range of over 25 different cartridges all at our special offer price of £17.95. This game uses a 16-bit microprocessor giving 16 colours and three-part harmony sound. The picture quality is incredible with 3D effects and realistic animation. An add-on keyboard is now available to convert the mattel into a full home computer with 16K RAM which will be fully expandable and programmable in Microsoft Basic. Other accessories are being added. The normal price of the Intellivision + free Soccer cartridge is £229.95 but our special offer price is £179.95 inc. VAT, saving you £50.

MATTEL OWNERS CLUB – Why not join our Mattel Owners Club and receive our regular newsletters containing details of all the latest cartridge releases. Telephone us with your name and address and we will add you name to our computer mailing list.

FREE 16-PAGE CARTRIDGE CATALOGUE – If you are interested in owning a Mattel, we now have available a 16-page catalogue describing the latest six cartridges to be released, as well as a new Mattel colour leaflet with brief description of all 25 cartridges. Telephone us for further details.

T.V. GAME CARTRIDGES

We specialise in the whole range of TV games and sell cartridges for the following games: *ATARI ★ MATTEL ★ ACETRONIC ★ PHILIPS ★ DATABASE ★ ROWTRON ★ INTERTON ★ TELENG.* Let us know if you own any of these games and we will let you have details of the range of cartridges available.

Attention INTERTON & ACETRONIC owners, we have over 75 assorted used cartridges in stock all with 1 year guarantee – ***SPECIAL OFFER £8.95 each***

We also have a number of secondhand games and cartridges

NOW £8 OFF

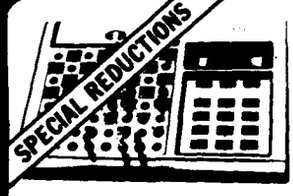
HAND-HELD GAMES

EARTH INVADERS

These invaders are a breed of creature hitherto unknown to man. They cannot be killed by traditional methods — they must be buried. The battle is conducted in a maze where squads of aliens chase home troops. The only way of eliminating them is by digging holes and burying them.

R.R.P. £26.95 **NOW £18.95** inc. VAT

SPECIAL REDUCTIONS



ELECTRONIC CHESS

Liquid crystal battery chess computer with 100-200 hrs battery life and two levels of play. Comes with separate chess board and pieces.

NOW £5 OFF
R.R.P. £24.95
SALE PRICE £19.95 (inc VAT)

GRADUATE CHESS

A de luxe version of the electronic chess set with integral chess board. The ideal portable chess set — see illustration

NOW **£29.95** INC VAT

FIDELITY MINI-SENSORY CHESS COMPUTER

The very first chess computer of its price to offer a portable computer with integral sensory board. Battery (6-8 hrs) or mains operated. This is a modular game and additional plug-in modules are planned for 1982 for advanced chess, popular openings, greatest master games, draughts and reversi.

MINI-SENSORY COMPUTER WITH STANDARD CHESS MODULE WAS £54.50 NOW **£49.95** INC VAT

Silica Shop are one of the country's leading specialists in Chess Computers and now stock a range of more than 20 Chess Computers, including Challenger 7/10/voice, Sensory 8 and Sensory Voice, Diplomat, System 3, Morphy, Great Game Machine, Voice Champion, and the new Scicys Mark V.

NOW £10 OFF

PAC MAN 2

Pac Man 2 is based on the latest pub game. It is a two-colour game of strategy, tactical pursuit and destruction pitting Pac Man against the large Ghosts. The object of the game is for Pac Man to attain as high a score as possible by capturing and destroying Ghosts, Bugs and Energizers without being himself destroyed by the Ghosts. Pac Man 2 incorporates the most modern and complex status displays ever produced and is now on release for the first in the UK offering an ideal present.

R.R.P. £34.95 **NOW £24.95** inc. VAT

NOW £8 OFF

SPACE INVADERS

Based on one of the most popular arcade games, Space Invader™ packs in lots of action with multi-shaped, brilliant LED vessels, including attack ships, bombs, defenders, missile rockets and a beam force cannon, plus exciting electronic sound effects. The attack ships attempt to bomb the ground defenders as they are moving. You manoeuvre the missile rockets — avoiding alien bombs — and destroy the invader force as quickly as you can. Progressive degree of difficulty. Includes automatic digital scoring. For ages 6 to adult.

R.R.P. £24.95 **NOW £16.95** inc. VAT

LESS THAN ½ PRICE

COLOUR CARTRIDGE T.V. GAME

Semi Programmable T.V. game
+ 4 cartridges
+ mains transformer
NOW £43.50 OFF
R.R.P. £73
SALE PRICE **£29.50** inc. VAT

SCOOP PURCHASE NOW ½ PRICE

BACKGAMMON COMPUTER

Silica stock a wide range of Backgammon computers from £28.95 upwards. Special offers now available on Gammonmaster.
~~Was £59.95~~
NOW **£48.95** inc. VAT

CALL JOTTER — THE AFFORDABLE ANSWER

½ THE PRICE OF COMPARABLE MACHINES

The Post Office certified telephone answering machine

"Sorry darling, I will be late home — Love John"

The Call Jotter 1 brings the affordable answer at the amazing price of £69 (or £99 for the Call Jotter 2 with built-in remote recall facilities). These amazing telephone answering machines are Post Office certified and guaranteed for one year. They make a thoughtful gift for home or business use.

Call Jotter 3 illustrated
TWINTAPE £139

NOW **£69.00** inc VAT

NOW £75 OFF

ADD-ON ADAPTOR

WAS £199 inc VAT
SALE PRICE £124 inc VAT

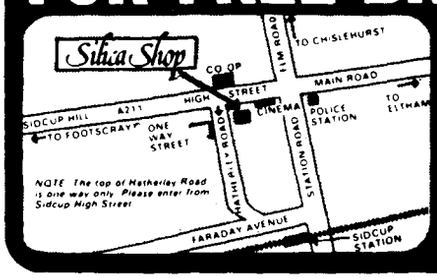
RADOFIN TELETEXT

Plug the adaptor into the aerial socket of your colour TV and receive the CEEFAX and ORACLE television information services.

THIS NEW MODEL INCORPORATES

★ Double height character facility ★ True PAL Colour ★ Meets latest BBC & IBA broadcast specifications ★ Push-button channel change ★ Unnecessary to remove the unit to watch normal TV programmes ★ Gold-plated circuit board for reliability.

FOR FREE BROCHURES – TEL: 01-301 1111



For free illustrated brochure and reviews on our range of electronic games, please telephone 01-301 1111. Free delivery service available. To order by telephone please quote your name, address and ACCESS/BARCLAYCARD number, and leave the rest to us. Post and packing Free of Charge. Express 48-hour delivery service available.

★ CALLERS WELCOME – Demonstrations daily at our Sidcup shop open from 9am-6pm Monday-Saturday (Early Closing Thursday 1pm. Late opening Friday 8pm).
★ 2-YEAR GUARANTEE – All goods are covered by a full year's guarantee and many are further covered by our exclusive Silica Shop 2-year Guarantee.
★ MONEY-BACK UNDERTAKING – If you are unsatisfied with your purchase and return it within 7 days we will give you a full refund.
★ AFTER-SALES SERVICE – Available on all machines out of guarantee.
★ COMPETITIVE PRICES – We are never knowingly undersold.
★ HELPFUL ADVICE – Available on the suitability of each machine.
★ CREDIT FACILITIES – Full credit facilities available over 12, 24 or 36 months at competitive rates of interest.
★ PART EXCHANGE SCHEME – Available on secondhand machines.
★ CREDIT CARDS WELCOME – Access/Barclaycard/Diners Club/American Express.

SILICA SHOP LIMITED
1-4 The Mews, Hatherley Road, Sidcup, Kent DA14 4DX
Telephone: 01-301 1111 or 01-309 1111 NST 10/82

SILICA SHOP

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Appointments

ASSISTANT TO CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Well known campaigning organisation wishes to free its Chief Executive from the burdens of administration to enable him to explore new initiatives. We therefore seek an assistant who will be directly responsible to the Chief Executive for all routine office management and servicing of the Committee of Management. Although this is largely an administrative post there will be some opportunity for creative work in connection with the organisation's advertising, publications and contacts with the public, politicians and the media.

The person appointed is likely to be over 25 with a proven record of management or administration and willing to work long hours when necessary. Salary is negotiable according to age and experience and is likely to be in the range of £7000 – £10,000 per annum plus other benefits.

Applicants should write by 29 October 1982 with detailed c.v. including personal and political interests to:– **Box 4930.**

COMPUTERS SURVEILLANCE DATABANKS

Experienced systems analysts and programmers with mainframe or mini experience required to work on new project concerned with political, social and technological controls on mass data systems.

The posts would suit women or men with several years computer experience, and with an interest in developing radical ideas about the role of computing. High salaries are available for the right people. All posts are in the South East of England.

Please write with brief details of your computing experience, age, and research interests. Further information will be given after a preliminary interview.

Write in the first instance to:
Box 4928

TRADE UNION ASSISTANT SECRETARY

required by

GREATER LONDON COUNCIL STAFF ASSOCIATION

to be responsible for membership and publicity.
Salary (including London Weighting) – **£8,319-£11,538** – Starting point according to experience.

Application forms from:
The Secretary, GLC SA, 150 Waterloo Rd, London SE1 8SB

CO-OPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT WORKER

required to promote and establish worker's co-operatives. This new post is the third full-time post in an expanding group of producer co-operatives and will be demanding and satisfying to someone with vigour, flair and a commitment to workers' co-operative enterprises.

Further details and application forms from Mike Bower, Sheffield Co-operative Development Group, Palatine Chambers, 22 Pinstone Street, Sheffield S1 2HN.

WEST LONDON MEDIA WORKSHOP

is looking for an experienced woman

VIDEO WORKER

Part-time, to join a small community media group in W10.

Phone 01-969 1020 for details

OV SELECTION CATERS for the more mature person as well as graduates and 'A' level students with typing and office skills. Phone Odette Veazey, OV Selection (Emp. Agy.) Abford House, 15 Wilton Road, London, SW1V 1LT. 01-828 8345.

BOOKSELLER. We are looking for a full-time worker. Desirable skills/experience: Co-operative working, book selling, socialist/feminist/anti-imperialist perspective, driver, accounting, enthusiasm and commitment. Salary £4,000. Apply by letter to Third World Publications, 151 Stratford Road, Birmingham B11 1RD. Closing date: 5 November.

RE-ADVERTISEMENT

DIRECTOR OF PUBLICITY

The **LABOUR PARTY** invites applications for the above post

The Director of Publicity is responsible for the Labour Party's full range of media and publicity services, including newspaper and broadcasting media relations (excluding 'Labour Weekly'), radio and television Party Political Broadcasts, advertising and promotion – and publicity support for campaign activity.

Journalistic skills and experience in the news media, public relations or information services are vital. Membership of the Labour Party and the NUJ essential.

The Labour Party is an equal opportunities employer

Salary: £15,090 p.a. rising to £15,920 p.a. after one year

Application forms and conditions of employment can be obtained from The General Secretary, The Labour Party, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT. (Tel: 01-703 0833.) Previous applicants will be considered but need not re-apply. Completed application forms must be returned by not later than Friday, 5 November 1982.

Headship

Dartington Hall School

HEAD

The Dartington Hall Trust wishes to appoint a Head of Dartington Hall School, which is an independent, co-educational, boarding and day school for pupils aged 3 to 18. The person they seek may come from inside or outside the world of education and must be prepared to further developments already taking place in the curriculum to explore the interface between education and the working world whilst maintaining the stance of the school which respects the integrity of the person.

Write for further details before applying to:

Eric Adams, The Bursar
Dartington Hall School
Totnes, Devon TQ9 6EB

Applications will close on 13 November, 1982.

Theatres

BARBICAN THEATRE. 01-628 8795. CC 01-638 8891. 24 hour info: 01-628 2295. Few day seats £3 from 10 a.m.
ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY
POPPY – 15, 16 (m. and e.) Oct. – book and lyrics by Peter Nichols, music by Monty Norman. A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM – final perfs 18, 19 (m. and e.), 20 Oct. HENRY IV Pt 1 – 21 Oct. Personal and tel. booking now open for perfs until 8 Jan. including PETER PAN, THE WINTER'S TALE, HENRY IV, THE PIT – THE WITCH OF EDMONTON by Dekker, Ford and Rowley – 15, 16 (m. and e.) Oct. A DOLL'S HOUSE by Henrik Ibsen – *final perfs* 18-20 Oct. OUR FRIENDS IN THE NORTH by Peter Flannery – 21 Oct.

CAMBRIDGE. 01-836 6056/1488. Evgs 7.45. Mat. Thu. 2.30. Sat. 5.00 & 8.00. A New Production of:
THE MIKADO
THE MIKADO
THE MIKADO
"An imaginative creation . . . Sumptuously Dressed . . . Comic Extravaganza" Gdn.

NATIONAL THEATRE. 01-928 2252. Olivier (open stage): 'Don Quixote', 'Schweyk in the Second World War', 'Guys and Dolls'. Lyttelton (proscenium stage): 'Major Barbara'. Cottesloe (small auditorium): 'Other Places', 'The Spanish Tragedy'. See daily press for dates and times or ring recorded information 01-928 2256.

SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE, EC1. CC 01-278 8916 (5 lines). 24 hr instant booking 01-200 0200. Grp sales 01-379 6061.
Until Sat. Whirligig Theatre
The Owl and the Pussycat went to see . . .
14 & 15 Oct. 10.30 a.m. & 2 p.m. Sat. 2 & 5 p.m.
19-30 Oct. ROYAL WINNIPEG BALLET
AMPLE FREE PARKING after 6.30 p.m.

THEATRE GOERS please note: cc – Credit cards' S-Student standby.

THEATRE

COMEDY 930 2578

SLEUTH

from Theatre Royal Stratford
Neil Dunn's first stage play
"laughter, hard truth and compassion." Sun. Times
voted Comedy of the Year '81 (SWET)
Seats £2.50-£6.50

DONMAR WAREHOUSE 836 1071
41 Earlham St., WC2 379 6565
The Musical
DESTRY RIDES AGAIN
with
Jill Gascoine & Alfred Molina

MERMAID 236 5568
cc 236 5324
Triumphant return of smash hit
TRAFFORD TANZI
'I advise Londoners to flock' – Gdn
Eves. 8 p.m.
Fri/Sat. 6.45, 9.15

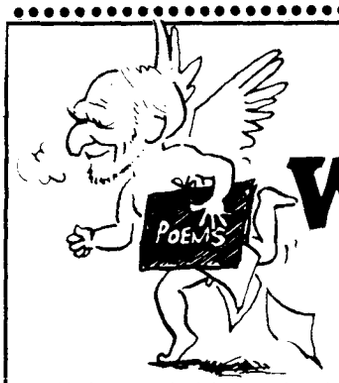
Join our FREE mailing list. Send sae to Dept NS
THEATRE DESPATCH 31 Shelton St WC2H 9HT

PSYCHICAL RESEARCH
Attitudes, Evidence & Hypotheses
by Professor Ellison, Pres., Society for Psychical Research

Investigating unexplained laws of nature and powers latent in man, this seminar traces scientific research up to the present and provides *Signposts for the Future.*

Sat. 16 Oct. 10.30 a.m.-5 p.m. Adm. £3
at THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN ENGLAND
50 Gloucester Place, W1H 3HJ. Tel. 01-935 9261

For details about one of Europe's finest libraries of comparative religion, classes in meditation, theosophy and yoga, send SAE to above address.



God's Worried

by
Roger Woddis

Available from good bookshops or direct from Ted Peacock, **New Statesman,** 10 Great Turnstile, London WC1, £2.25 (including postage & packing).

Incorporating 'The Nation', 'The Athenaeum' and 'The Week-end Review'. Registered as a newspaper. Printed by QB Ltd, Sheepen Place, Colchester. Published by the Statesman & Nation Publishing Co. Ltd, at Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ. Second class postage paid at New York NY.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED